

SKIN DEEP:  
THE SCIENCE  
OF RACE

DAWN OF  
THE WHITE  
MINORITY

US AND THEM:  
WHY WE  
DIVIDE

DRIVING  
WHILE  
BLACK

SPECIAL ISSUE

NATIONAL  
GEOGRAPHIC



# Black and White

These twin sisters make us rethink  
everything we know about race

APRIL 2018

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APRIL 2018 • VOL. 233 • NO. 4 • OFFICIAL JOURNAL OF THE NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC SOCIETY

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## THE RACE ISSUE

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To mark the 50th anniversary of Martin Luther King, Jr.'s assassination, we explore what race means in the 21st century.



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What is race? Science tells us there is no genetic basis for it. Instead it's largely a made-up label, used to define and separate us.

By Elizabeth Kolbert Photographs by Robin Hammond

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Human beings are wired at birth to distinguish Us from Them and to favor our own group. Can science help us bridge the divides?

By David Berreby Photographs by John Stanmeyer

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## ON THE COVER

**Marcia (left) and Millie Biggs**, both 11, say people are shocked to learn that they're fraternal twins. Marcia looks more like their mother, who's English, and Millie looks more like their father, who's of Jamaican descent. See more about the twins on page 12. *Photo by Robin Hammond*

**#IDefineMe** Science defines you by your DNA. Society defines you by the color of your skin. How do you define yourself?

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By Wendi C. Thomas

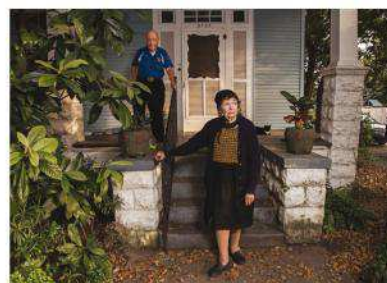


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By Michele Norris

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### DIVERSITY IN AMERICA

This year *National Geographic* will offer multimedia coverage of racial, ethnic, and religious groups and examine their changing roles in 21st-century life.

#### THE SERIES WILL INCLUDE:

#### MUSLIMS

In the United States, nearly 3.5 million Muslims from some 75 countries are experiencing opportunity – and opposition.

#### LATINOS

Latinos in the United States come from many races. Now at about 18 percent of the population, they're the nation's largest minority group.

#### ASIAN AMERICANS

South Asians are a major force in medicine, technology, and business. Today they're playing increasingly prominent roles in mainstream American culture. Also: We revisit some of the 120,000 Japanese U.S. citizens incarcerated during World War II.

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**STREETS IN HIS NAME**

Wendi C. Thomas is editor and publisher of the website MLK50: Justice Through Journalism. She also writes for ESPN about racial and economic justice.



**SKIN DEEP**

Elizabeth Kolbert has been a staff writer at the *New Yorker* since 1999. Her most recent book is *The Sixth Extinction: An Unnatural History*.



**SKIN DEEP**

Robin Hammond took photos of nine-year-olds around the globe and asked them about gender for the *Geographic's* January 2017 issue on the topic.



**WHAT DIVIDES US**

David Berreby's award-winning latest book, *Us and Them: The Science of Identity*, explores the human instinct to separate into groups.



**WHAT DIVIDES US**

John Stanmeyer, who has worked for *National Geographic* since 2004, uses his photography, writing, and filmmaking to explore issues around the world.



**A PLACE OF THEIR OWN**

Nina Robinson's photography unites personal, documentary, and fine art styles. Her work spurs viewers to see past race, class, age, and gender.



**A PLACE OF THEIR OWN**

Writer and educator Clint Smith focuses on racism and inequality in the United States. His first book of poetry, *Counting Descent*, was published in 2016.



**A PLACE OF THEIR OWN**

Brooklyn-based photographer Radcliffe "Ruddy" Roye uses portraiture and photojournalism to tell real stories of real people, especially fellow Jamaicans.



**WHITE AMERICA**

Journalist Michele Norris started NPR's Race Card Project to spark discussion about race. Her book, *The Grace of Silence*, is about her complex family.



**THE STOP**

For a report on drivers' experiences of racial profiling, *National Geographic* collaborated with the Undeclared, an ESPN website that explores the intersection of race, culture, and sports. "The Stop" is the work of (above, left to right) writer Michael Fletcher and photographer Wayne Lawrence. Fletcher, a senior writer at the Undeclared, previously was a reporter at the *Washington Post* covering education and race relations. He is co-author of the 2007 book *Supreme Discomfort: The Divided Soul of Clarence Thomas*. Lawrence is a widely published documentary photographer whose stated focus is "communities otherwise overlooked by mainstream media." His work has been exhibited at galleries and institutions including the Bronx Museum of the Arts. Lawrence also shot the photos for this month's story on intermarriage.



**WHITE AMERICA**

Gillian Laub drew on more than a decade of photographing lingering racism in the U.S. South for her 2015 book and documentary, *Southern Rites*.



**RESISTANCE, REIMAGINED**

Omar Victor Diop produces fashion and advertising photography as well as fine art photo projects. He is based in Dakar, Senegal.



**RESISTANCE, REIMAGINED**

Maurice Berger is a cultural historian. He writes a series of essays, "Race Stories," that appears on the Lens Blog of the *New York Times*.



**HALLOWED EARTH**

In a *National Geographic* TV series, *America Inside Out With Katie Couric*, the journalist looks at the issues shaping our nation. Premieres April 11 at 10/9c.

PHOTOS (FROM TOP, LEFT TO RIGHT, BY ROW): MARCI LAMBERT; BARRY GOLDSTEIN; MADS NØRGAARD; SOPHIE LAIR-BERREBY; ROB BECKER; NINA ROBINSON; KENDAL THOMAS; SION FULLANA; STEPHEN VOSS; TAHL RAZ; OMAR VICTOR DIOP; MARVIN HEIFERMAN; VALERIE MACON, AFP/GETTY IMAGES; REBECCA HALE, NGM STAFF (ABOVE, "THE STOP")

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# TO RISE ABOVE THE RACISM OF THE PAST, WE MUST ACKNOWLEDGE IT

It is November 2, 1930, and *National Geographic* has sent a reporter and a photographer to cover a magnificent occasion: the crowning of Haile Selassie, King of Kings of Ethiopia, Conquering Lion of the Tribe of Judah. There are trumpets, incense, priests, spear-wielding warriors. The story runs 14,000 words, with 83 images.

If a ceremony in 1930 honoring a black man had taken place in America, instead of Ethiopia, you can pretty much guarantee there wouldn't have been a story at all. Even worse, if Haile Selassie had lived in the United States, he would almost certainly have been denied entry to our lectures in segregated Washington, D.C., and he might not have been allowed to be a National Geographic member. According to Robert M. Poole, who wrote *Explorers House: National Geographic and the World It Made*, "African Americans were excluded from membership—at least in Washington—through the 1940s."

I'm the tenth editor of *National Geographic* since its founding in 1888. I'm the first woman and the first Jewish person—a member of two groups that also once faced discrimination here. It hurts to share the appalling stories from the magazine's past. But when we decided to devote our April magazine to the topic of race, we thought we should examine our own history before turning our reportorial gaze to others.

Race is not a biological construct, as writer Elizabeth Kolbert explains in this issue, but a social one that can have devastating effects. "So many of the horrors of the past few centuries can be traced to the idea that one race is inferior to another," she writes. "Racial distinctions continue to shape our politics, our neighborhoods, and our sense of self."

How we present race matters. I hear from readers that *National Geographic* provided their first look at the world.

Our explorers, scientists, photographers, and writers have taken people to places they'd never even imagined; it's a tradition that still drives our coverage and of which we're rightly proud. And it means we have a duty, in every story, to present accurate and authentic depictions—a duty heightened when we cover fraught issues such as race.

We asked John Edwin Mason to help with this examination. Mason is well positioned for the task: He's a University of Virginia professor specializing in the history of photography and the history of Africa, a frequent crossroads of our storytelling. He dived into our archives.

What Mason found in short was that until the 1970s *National Geographic* all but ignored people of color who lived in the United States, rarely acknowledging them beyond laborers or domestic workers. Meanwhile it pictured "natives" elsewhere as exotics, famously and frequently unclothed, happy hunters, noble savages—every type of cliché.

Unlike magazines such as *Life*, Mason said, *National Geographic* did little to push its readers beyond the stereotypes ingrained in white American culture.

"Americans got ideas about the world from Tarzan movies and crude racist caricatures," he said. "Segregation was the way it was. *National Geographic* wasn't teaching as much as reinforcing messages they already received and doing so in a magazine that had tremendous authority. *National Geographic* comes into existence at the height of colonialism, and the world was divided into the colonizers and the colonized. That was a color line, and *National Geographic* was reflecting that view of the world."

Some of what you find in our archives leaves you speechless, like a 1916 story about Australia. Underneath photos of two Aboriginal people, the caption reads: "South Australian Blackfellows: These

1. In a full-issue article on Australia that ran in 1916, aboriginal Australians were called "savages" who "rank lowest in intelligence of all human beings."

2. In 1941 *National Geographic* used a slavery-era slur to describe California cotton workers waiting to load a ship in California: "Pickaninny, banjos, and bales are like those you might see at New Orleans."

3. South African gold miners were "entranced by thundering drums" during "vigorous tribal dances," a 1962 issue reported.

4. An article reporting on apartheid South Africa in 1977 shows Winnie Mandela, a founder of the Black Parents' Association and wife of Nelson. She was one of some 150 people the government prohibited from leaving their towns, speaking to the press, and talking to more than two people at a time.

5. "Cards and clay pipes amuse guests in Fairfax House's 18th-century parlor," reads the caption in a 1956 article on Virginia history. Although slave labor built homes featured in the article, the writer contended that they "stand for a chapter of this country's history every American is proud to remember."

6. Photographer Frank Schreider shows men from Timor island his camera in a 1962 issue. The magazine often ran photos of "uncivilized" native people seemingly fascinated by "civilized" Westerners' technology.





savages rank lowest in intelligence of all human beings.”

Questions arise not just from what’s in the magazine, but what isn’t. Mason compared two stories we did about South Africa, one in 1962, the other in 1977. The 1962 story was printed two and a half years after the massacre of 69 black South Africans by police in Sharpeville, many shot in the back as they fled. The brutality of the killings shocked the world.

“*National Geographic’s* story barely mentions any problems,” Mason said. “There are no voices of black South Africans. That absence is as important as what is in there. The only black people are doing exotic dances...servants or workers. It’s bizarre, actually, to consider what the editors, writers, and photographers had to consciously not see.”

Contrast that with the piece in 1977, in the wake of the U.S. civil rights era: “It’s not a perfect article, but it acknowledges the oppression,” Mason said. “Black people are pictured. Opposition leaders are pictured. It’s a very different article.”

Fast-forward to a 2015 story about Haiti, when we gave cameras to young Haitians and asked them to document the reality of their world. “The images by Haitians are really, really important,” Mason said, and would have been “un-thinkable” in our past. So would our coverage now of ethnic and religious conflicts, evolving gender norms, the realities of today’s Africa, and much more.

Mason also uncovered a string of oddities—photos of “the native person fascinated by Western technology. It really creates this us-and-them dichotomy between the civilized and the uncivilized.” And then there’s the excess of pictures of beautiful Pacific-island women.

“If I were talking to my students about the period until after the 1960s, I would say, ‘Be cautious about what you think you are learning here,’” he said. “At the same time, you acknowledge the strengths *National Geographic* had even in this period, to take people out into the world to see things we’ve never seen before. It’s possible to say that a magazine can open people’s eyes at the same time it closes them.”



April 4 marks the 50th anniversary of the assassination of Martin Luther King, Jr. It’s a worthy moment to step back, to take stock of where we are on race. It’s also a conversation that is changing in real time: In two years, for the first time in U.S. history, less than half the children in the nation will be white. So let’s talk about what’s working when it comes to race, and what isn’t. Let’s examine why we continue to segregate along racial lines and how we can build inclusive communities. Let’s confront today’s shameful use of racism as a political strategy and prove we are better than this.

For us this issue also provided an important opportunity to look at our own efforts to illuminate the human journey, a core part of our mission for 130 years. I want a future editor of *National Geographic* to look back at our coverage with pride—not only about the stories we decided to tell and how we told them but about the diverse group of writers, editors, and photographers behind the work.

We hope you will join us in this exploration of race, beginning this month and continuing throughout the year. Sometimes these stories, like parts of our own history, are not easy to read. But as Michele Norris writes in this issue, “It’s hard for an individual—or a country—to evolve past discomfort if the source of the anxiety is only discussed in hushed tones.”

Susan Goldberg, *Editor in Chief*

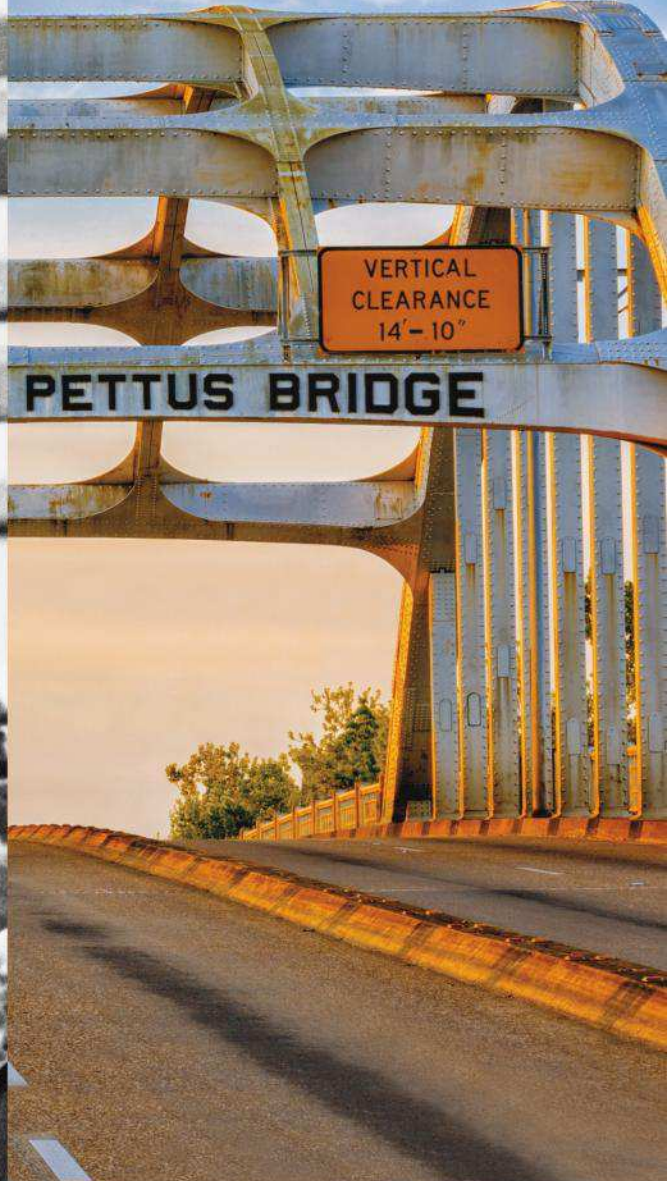


Top: “I buy bread from her every day,” Haitian photographer Smith Neuvieme said of fellow islander Manuela Clermont. He made her the center of this image, published in 2015. Above: *National Geographic* of the mid-20th century was known for its glamorous depictions of Pacific islanders. Tarita Teriipaia, from Bora-Bora, was pictured in July 1962—the same year she appeared opposite Marlon Brando in the movie *Mutiny on the Bounty*.

1965



2018



## *Walk in the footsteps of giants.*

Voting-rights activists John Lewis and Hosea Williams led 600 peaceful marchers across the Edmund Pettus Bridge in 1965, only to be viciously attacked by state and local lawmen on what became known as Bloody Sunday. Today, you can walk across the historic Selma, Alabama, bridge, just one of dozens of inspiring landmarks on the U.S. Civil Rights Trail. To learn more about heroes as diverse as Georgia's Martin Luther King Jr. and Virginia's 16-year-old Barbara Johns, go to [CivilRightsTrail.com](https://www.CivilRightsTrail.com).

**What happened here changed the world.**





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**Boulenger's Tree Frog** (*Rhacophorus lateralis*)

**Size:** Head and body length, 28.6 - 34.8 mm (1.1 - 1.4 inches) **Weight:** Unknown **Habitat:** Prefers tropical moist evergreen and deciduous forest **Surviving number:** Unknown



Photographed by Yashpal Rathore

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# ‘People Are Made How They Are’

For 11-year-old twins Marcia and Millie, the differences in their looks have never been an issue.

By Patricia Edmonds

When Amanda Wanklin and Michael Biggs fell in love, they “didn’t give a toss” about the challenges they might face as a biracial couple, Amanda says. “What was more important was what we wanted together.”

They settled down in Birmingham, England, eager to start a family. On July 3, 2006, Amanda gave birth to fraternal twin girls, and the ecstatic parents gave their daughters intertwined names: One would be Millie Marcia Madge Biggs, the other Marcia Millie Madge Biggs.

From a young age the girls had similar features but very different color schemes. Marcia had light brown hair and fair skin like her English-born mother. Millie had black hair and brown skin like her father, who’s of Jamaican descent. “We never worried about it; we just accepted it,” Michael says.

“When they were first born,” Amanda recalls, “I would be pushing them in the pram, and people would look at me and then look at my one daughter and then look at my other daughter. And then I’d get asked the question: ‘Are they twins?’”

“Yes.”

“But one’s white and one’s black.”

“Yes. It’s genes.”

People who commented on the girls weren’t openly hostile or judgmental—just very curious, Amanda says. And then “as time went on, people just saw the beauty in them.”

The twins know what racism is. “Racism is where somebody judges you by your color and not by your actual self,” Millie says. Marcia describes racism as “a negative thing, because it can hurt people’s feelings.” Both say that they haven’t perceived racism when people note the contrast in their looks.

Amanda, who works as a home-care aide, calls Millie and Marcia her “one

in a million” miracle. But it’s not that rare that a biracial couple would have fraternal twins who each look more like one parent than the other, says statistical geneticist Alicia Martin. The probability would be different for each couple, depending on their genetics, says Martin, a postdoctoral research fellow at the Broad Institute in Cambridge, Massachusetts.

Fraternal twins account for about one in 100 births. When a biracial couple has fraternal twins, the traits that emerge in each child depend on numerous variables, including “where the parents’ ancestors are from and complex pigment genetics,” Martin says. In addition, research on skin color is further complicated by a history of “study biases that mean we know more about what makes lighter skin light than what makes darker skin dark.”

Skin color, she notes, “is not a binary trait” that has only two possibilities. “It’s a quantitative trait, and everyone has some gradient on this spectrum.”

Michael, who owns an auto-repair business, says he’s faced hostility at times because of the color of his skin. He vividly recalls an episode from his youth when a car full of men sped by and shouted slurs at him and his brothers.

“But it’s a different time now,” Michael says. Neither he nor Amanda has ever witnessed racist behavior toward the girls.

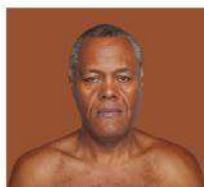
“When people see us, they think that we’re just best friends,” Marcia says. “When they learn that we’re twins, they’re kind of shocked because one’s black and one’s white.” But when the twins are asked about their differences, they mention something else entirely. “Millie likes things that are girly. She likes pink and all of that,” Marcia says. “I don’t like the color pink; I’m a tomboy. People are made how they are.”



Opposite: Michael Biggs sees a clear family resemblance in his twin daughters, Marcia (left) and Millie: “They both have my nose.” Above: Even when the twins’ mother, Amanda Wanklin (center photo), dressed them alike, there was no mistaking one for the other.







PANTONE 317-5 C



PANTONE 97-7 C



PANTONE 58-6 C



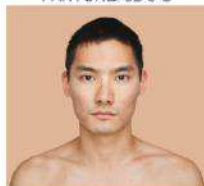
PANTONE 92-9 C



PANTONE 59-4 C



PANTONE 322-1 C



PANTONE 58-6 C



PANTONE 58-8 C



PANTONE 65-7 C

# A COLOR WHEEL OF HUMANITY

'I STRONGLY BELIEVE BLACK AND WHITE DON'T EXIST,' SAYS PHOTOGRAPHER ANGÉLICA DASS. FOR SIX YEARS, SHE HAS MATCHED THOUSANDS OF PEOPLE'S SKIN TONES WITH SHADES ON A STANDARD COLOR PALETTE TO SHOW HOW ARBITRARY RACIAL CLASSIFICATIONS CAN BE.

PHOTOGRAPHS BY ANGÉLICA DASS

By Nina Strochlic

When people saw the brown skin of Brazilian Angélica Dass and the pink tones of her Spanish husband, they would theorize about the color of their future children. For clues, Dass looked at her family, whose European and African skin tones range from “pancakes to peanuts to chocolate.”

In 2012 she photographed herself, her then husband, and their families to show this medley. She’d match a strip of pixels from their noses to a color card from Pantone, the longtime authority on color standards. So began “Humanae,” a project that has collected 4,000 portraits and myriad human colors in 18 countries.

Skin color still determines treatment in the 21st century. “This dehumanization of human beings is happening now,” Dass says. “On the border of Libya and in our everyday lives, when someone cannot have the same freedom as you, it’s because you’re treating them as if they are a little less human.”

Dass blames what she calls our “binary” color palette. When she was six, her teacher told her to use the “skin tone” crayon: “I looked at that pink and thought, How can I tell her this is not my skin color?” That night, she prayed to wake up white.

Later, as a design and fashion student, Dass learned to see thousands of hues within each color. She tells students this when she brings her project to schools, but most already know. “Kids don’t describe themselves as black and white—we teach them black and white,” Dass says. It was kids, she says, who coined color names like peanuts and chocolate that she now uses for her own family.

Creating “Humanae” has taken her from Tennessee, where a former white supremacist cried in her arms, to Switzerland, where elders met with the refugees they opposed resettling. “The places you don’t expect to find the empathy can be where a small seed can start to grow,” she says. “And maybe it can be the seed to transform our future as human beings.”



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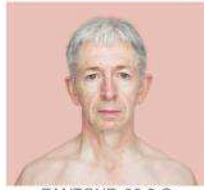
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PANTONE 53-7 C



PANTONE 38-8 C



PANTONE 99-8 C



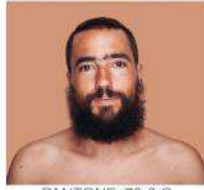
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PANTONE 320-2 C



PANTONE 58-7 C



PANTONE 78-6 C



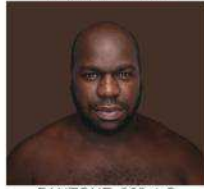
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PANTONE 109-9 C



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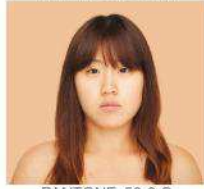
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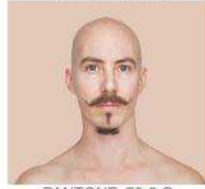
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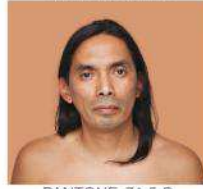
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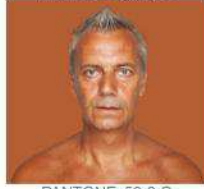
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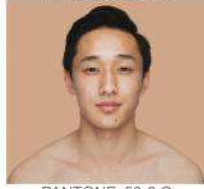
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PANTONE 71-5 C



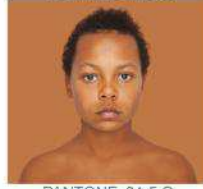
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PANTONE 59-6 C



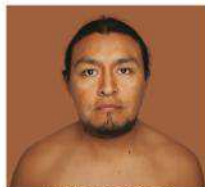
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PANTONE 64-5 C



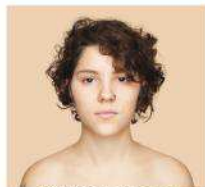
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PANTONE. 66-5 C



PANTONE. 318-5 C



PANTONE. 51-7 C



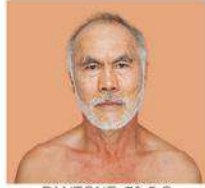
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PANTONE. 65-5 C



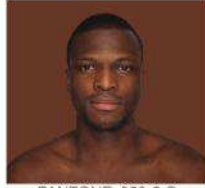
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PANTONE. 70-5 C



PANTONE. 98-9 C



PANTONE. 320-2 C



PANTONE. 59-8 C



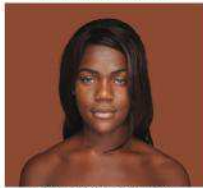
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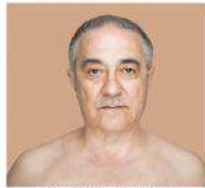
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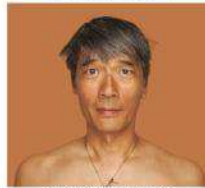
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PANTONE. 321-6 C



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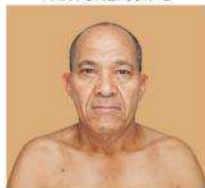
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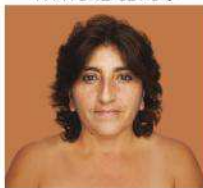
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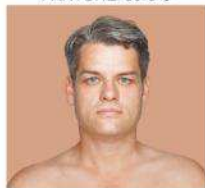
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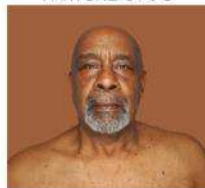
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PANTONE. 66-5 C



PANTONE. 58-8 C



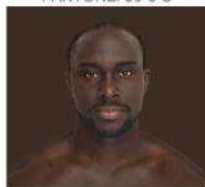
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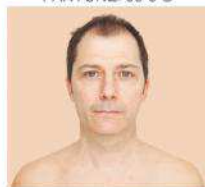
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PANTONE. 62-6 C



PANTONE. 323-1 C



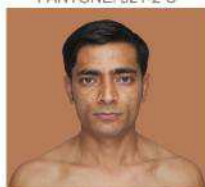
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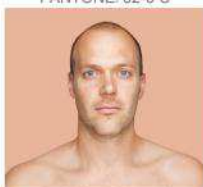
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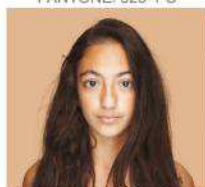
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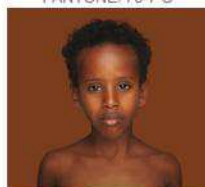
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PANTONE. 75-7 C



PANTONE. 51-6 C



PANTONE. 318-3 C



PANTONE. 51-5 C

# STREETS IN HIS



## Kolkata, India

DR. MARTIN LUTHER KING SARANI

*Renamed in 1986 • Photographed by Ian Teh*

A vendor sells a drink made from *sattu* flour on the residential road formerly called Wood Street. India's native son Mahatma Gandhi, who led a peaceful resistance against British colonialism, was "the guiding light of our technique of nonviolent

# NAME

More than a thousand streets across the world bear Rev. Martin Luther King, Jr.'s name. As we reach the 50th anniversary of his assassination, how do these roads reflect the civil rights icon's values and teachings?



social change," Rev. Martin Luther King, Jr., said. "Non-violence is not sterile passivity," King noted during the 1964 speech in which he accepted the Nobel Peace Prize, "but a powerful moral force which makes for social transformation."



## Bonn, Germany

**MARTIN LUTHER KING STRASSE**

*Renamed in 1968 • Photographed by Martin Roemers*

As the school day ends, parents retrieve their children from Bonn International School, which educates students of 76 nationalities. In Germany, King's nonviolent resistance strategies found fertile ground. In the late 1960s sit-ins were



**a common tactic of West German student protests. In the 1970s citizens protesting a nuclear plant near Hamburg sang the civil rights anthem “We Shall Overcome.” King’s widow, Coretta Scott King, spoke at a 1981 Bonn rally against nuclear weapons.**

BY WENDI C. THOMAS

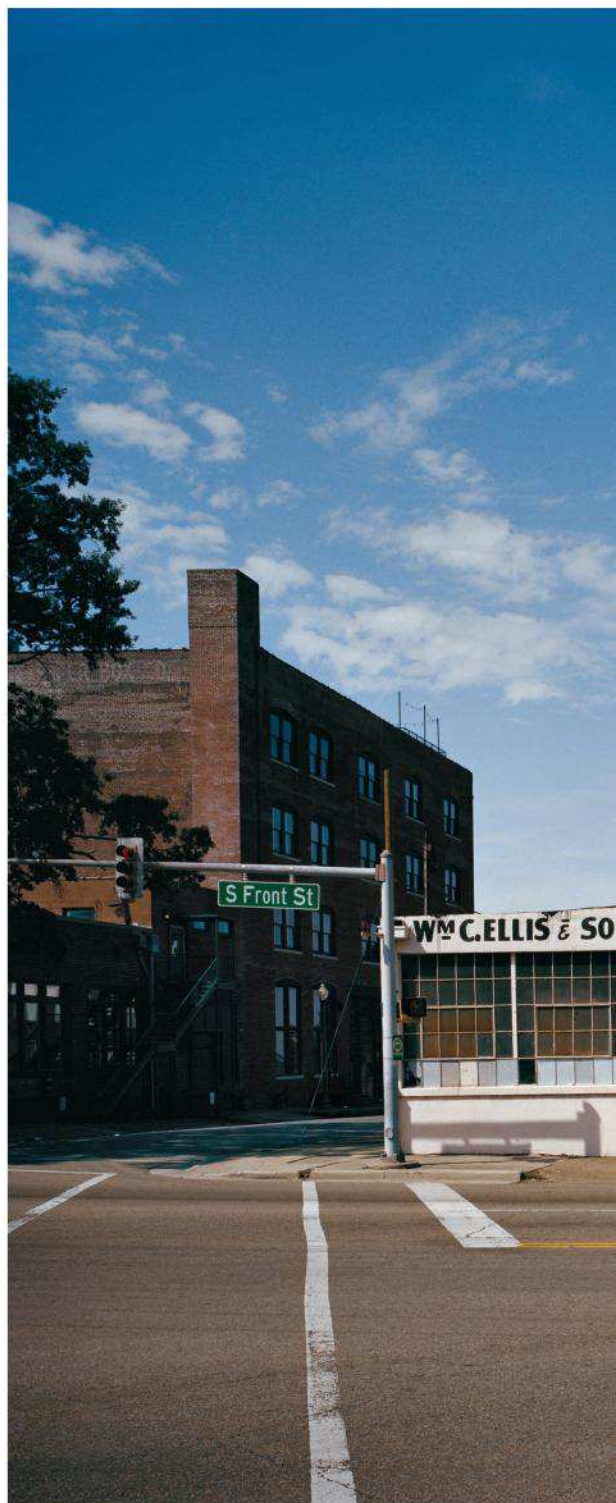
**T**hree weeks after Rev. Martin Luther King, Jr.'s assassination in 1968, the city council in Mainz, Germany, named a street for the slain civil rights leader—doing in just a few days what King's birthplace of Atlanta took eight years to do. Memphis, Tennessee, the place where King was killed, also named a city street after him—but not until more than 40 years after his death.

A new name can signal a brilliant future, as when the Old Testament's Abram, "exalted father," was divinely renamed Abraham, the "father of many nations." When the name of a place is changed, it's also a sign of power and influence—it reflects who is in charge and who has made an impression on the culture. And so in Schwerin, Germany, Dr. Martin Luther King Strasse keeps company with Anne Frank Strasse. In Saint-Martin-d'Hères, France, Rue Martin Luther King abuts Rue Rosa Lee Parks, in honor of the woman who sparked the Montgomery, Alabama, bus boycott in 1955. In Port-au-Prince, Haiti, the road named for the 18th-century revolutionary Toussaint L'Ouverture segues into the street named for King.

Two years before his death, King's approval rating in the United States was just 33 percent, likely a reflection of racism and many white Americans' discomfort with his radical agenda for economic justice. With every passing decade, though, his stock climbs—even while his agenda can seem increasingly blurred. Today, 50 years after his death, some 90 percent of Americans have a favorable view of King.

At least 955 streets in the U.S. bear King's name. Many run through lower income areas. But the stereotype of them all as bleak thoroughfares in decaying neighborhoods is overblown. A study of hundreds of such streets by University of Tennessee geographer Derek Alderman found little overall difference in business activity there and on the nation's Main Streets.

"Once you name a street after someone like King, you better be certain that you maintain the street as a monument to him, so that if he were to



[ON NGM.COM/APR2018](https://ngm.com/apr2018)

Explore additional streets around the world named in honor of Martin Luther King, Jr., on an interactive map.





## Memphis, Tennessee

**DR. M. L. KING JR. AVENUE**

*Renamed in 2012 • Photographed by Elias Williams*

Running within blocks of the motel where King was assassinated and past Clayborn Temple, where he began his final march, Memphis's MLK Avenue ends alongside a machine shop slated for redevelopment.



## Port-au-Prince, Haiti

**AVENUE MARTIN LUTHER KING**

*Renamed in 1968 • Photographed by Philomène Joseph*

Vendors gather at the junction of streets named for King and for Haitian revolutionary Toussaint L'Ouverture. Other roads in the capital are named for freedom fighters, including John Brown, the American abolitionist hanged for raiding a federal



arsenal in 1859; Haile Selassie, the Ethiopian ruler who fought Italian colonialists in the 1930s; and Jean-Jacques Dessalines, L'Ouverture's lieutenant, who helped defeat the French to make Haiti the world's first independent black republic in 1804.





## New York, New York

### **DR. MARTIN LUTHER KING JR. BOULEVARD**

*Renamed in 1984.  
Photographed by  
Elias Williams*

**Dancers in artist  
Ebony Golden's  
"125th and Free-  
dom" performance  
proceed down  
the thoroughfare.  
Part protest and  
part parade, the  
choreographed  
production along  
what is also known  
as 125th Street  
explores migration,  
gentrification, and  
emancipation in a  
society that, in  
King's words, puts  
profits over people.  
Harlem has long  
been a hub of black  
art, life, and culture  
in America.**

come back and visit the street, he would be proud,” said Daniel D’Oca, who taught a course called “The MLK Way: Building on Black America’s Main Street” at Harvard University Graduate School of Design in 2015. The course asked students to visualize King streets that echoed his values—racially integrated, thriving and peaceful, economically stable, with commerce that meets the needs of nearby residents.

The global MLK street count is upwards of a thousand, including a number of Martin Luther King streets in Germany, the country from which he got his name.

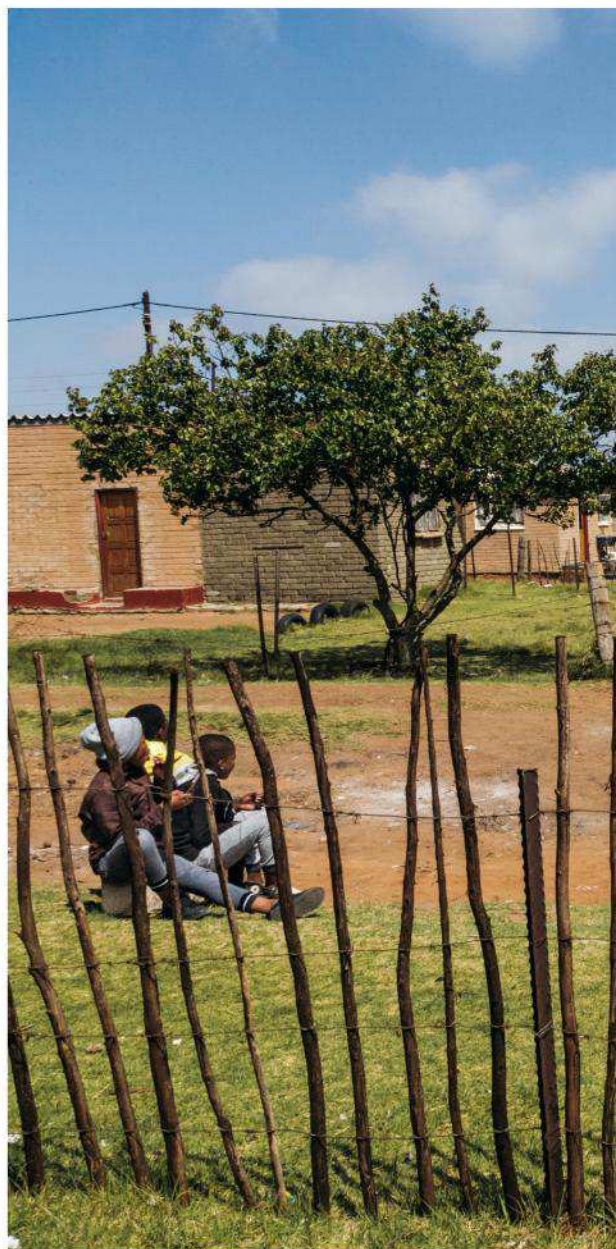
King and his father were originally named Michael. But the elder King, also a Baptist preacher, was so taken with Protestant reformer Martin Luther during a 1934 trip to Berlin that he changed his name and that of his firstborn, then age five.

The victories of the civil rights movement made progress toward Martin Luther King, Jr.’s dream of ending state-sanctioned segregation. His death hastened Congress’s passage of the Fair Housing Act. For black Americans, the decades after King’s death brought a decline in poverty and an increase in high school graduation and homeownership rates. But the proliferation of MLK streets doesn’t signify a global commitment to end poverty.

In Memphis, the city where King was killed, poverty rates have outpaced the nation’s. A 1971 attempt to rename a city street for King failed. In 2012 the plan was resurrected by city councilman Berlin Boyd and was approved.

“This is a city where his blood cries from the streets,” Boyd said. About two miles long, Dr. M.L. King Jr. Avenue is one of the last streets on which King marched. Most of its landscape is unremarkable as it lumbers along a route that includes views of the back sides of an NBA arena and a community college. On March 28, 1968, King led thousands of protesters on what was then Linden Avenue to city hall to confront the anti-union, segregationist mayor, Henry Loeb, who had refused to negotiate with striking black sanitation workers. The march turned violent. To prove he could lead a peaceful demonstration, King returned on April 3.

That night he delivered his “I’ve Been to the Mountaintop” speech. The next day he was



## Ermelo, South Africa

### MARTIN LUTHER KING STREET

*Renamed circa 2007 • Photographed by Andrew Esiebo*

**In a December 1964 speech, King noted that “the problem of racial injustice is not limited to any one nation.” Economic boycotts eventually would end the system that incarcerated black leader Nelson Mandela, King predicted. He was right. After years of sanctions from the U.S. and other nations, apartheid fell in 1994, but its effects linger. Central Ermelo has integrated, but this new neighborhood is more than 99 percent black.**



gunned down on a motel balcony. Today Memphis is trying to honor King's sacrifice. Last summer the city council approved payouts to the 29 surviving sanitation strikers to make up for circumstances that shorted their retirement accounts. After taxes, the men will get about a thousand dollars for each year since King's death. But for some who are still climbing into garbage trucks, the money isn't enough to retire on.

King is often remembered for speaking of a simple goal: Black children and white children hand in hand, as if they were siblings.

The King more frequently forgotten asked for

far more, demanding "a radical redistribution of political and economic power."

"All over the globe," King said a year before he was killed, "men are revolting against old systems of exploitation and oppression, and out of the wounds of a frail world, new systems of justice and equality are being born." □

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This global story was the first feature assignment for photographers **Andrew Esiebo** (based in Lagos, Nigeria), **Philomène Joseph** (Port-au-Prince, Haiti), **Martin Roemers** (Delft, Netherlands), **Ian Teh** (Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia), and **Elias Williams** (New York City).

# LIFETIME OF INEQUALITY

Race and ethnicity can shape a person's life from beginning to end. In the U.S., disparities in health, wealth, and access to education among the four major demographic groups—Asian, white, Hispanic, and black—persist and can be compounded over time. For example, blacks and Hispanics earn less than whites and Asians. Low wages often make it harder to finance a child's education. For people without a college degree, upward mobility can be particularly difficult to achieve.

## ○ FINANCES

The child poverty rate for blacks and Hispanics is more than double the rate for whites and Asians. Higher unemployment rates and lower earnings contribute to the gap.

## ▣ EDUCATION

Hispanics and blacks are less likely than Asians and whites to graduate from high school and attend college. Asians significantly outpace all other groups in college enrollment.

## + HEALTH CARE

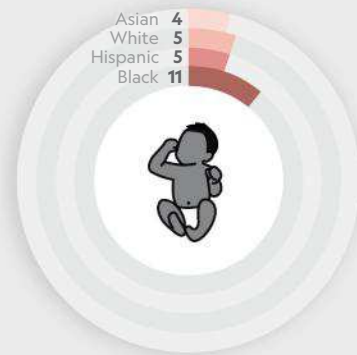
Blacks have higher infant mortality and lower life expectancy than the other groups. Yet compared with Hispanics, who have similar diabetes rates, blacks have more health insurance coverage.

Race categories (white, black, and Asian) exclude people of Hispanic ethnicity. The Hispanic category includes Hispanics of all races.

FIGURES ARE PERCENTAGES UNLESS OTHERWISE SPECIFIED.  
 MONICA SERRANO, NGM STAFF; KELSEY NOWAKOWSKI  
 SOURCES: NATIONAL CENTER FOR HEALTH STATISTICS; NATIONAL CENTER FOR EDUCATION STATISTICS; U.S. BUREAU OF LABOR STATISTICS; U.S. CENSUS BUREAU; NATIONAL CENTER FOR CHRONIC DISEASE PREVENTION AND HEALTH PROMOTION; PEW RESEARCH CENTER; AARP; U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

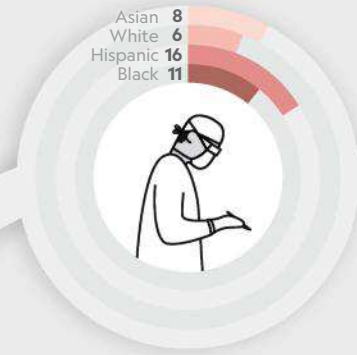
### + RISKY INFANCY

Infant deaths per thousand live births, 2014



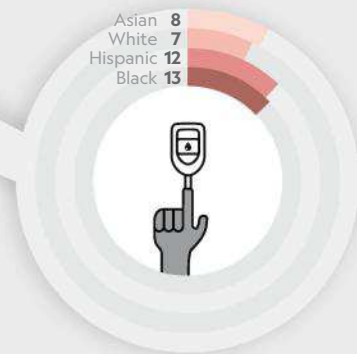
### + LIVING WITHOUT INSURANCE

Uninsured rate, 2016



### + HEALTH STRUGGLES

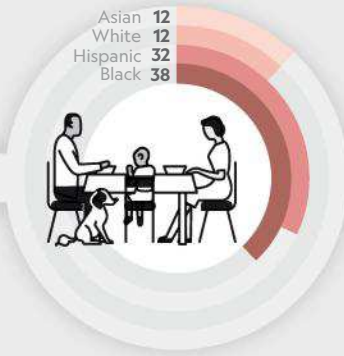
Prevalence of diagnosed diabetes in adults, 2013-15





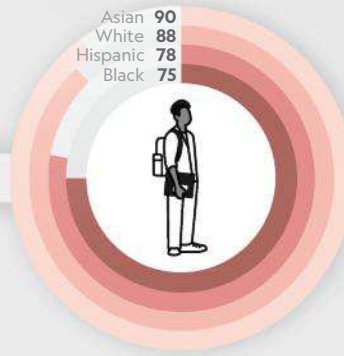
## ○ CHALLENGING CHILDHOOD

Share of children under age 18 living in poverty, 2014



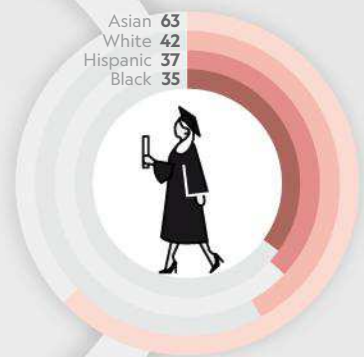
## ▣ GRADUATION GAP

Graduation rate for public high school students, 2014-15 school year



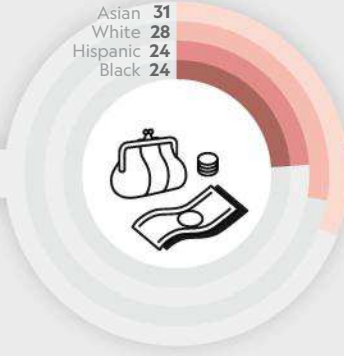
## ▣ DEGREES FOR SOME

Rate of 18- to 24-year-olds enrolled in college, 2015



## ○ EARNINGS GAP

Median hourly wage in dollars, workers with a higher education, 2015



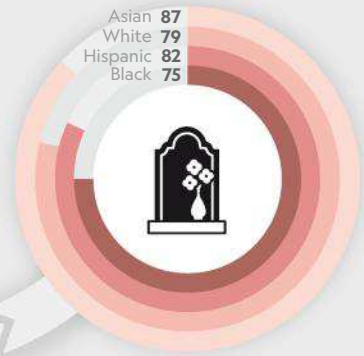
## ○ UNEVEN EMPLOYMENT

Unemployment rate, annual average, 2016



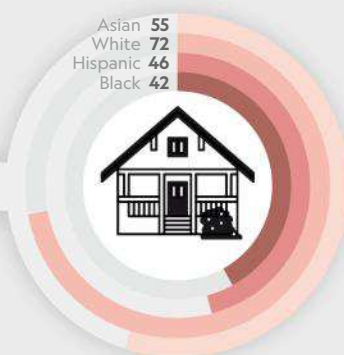
## + DISPARATE LIFE SPANS

Life expectancy at birth in years, 2015



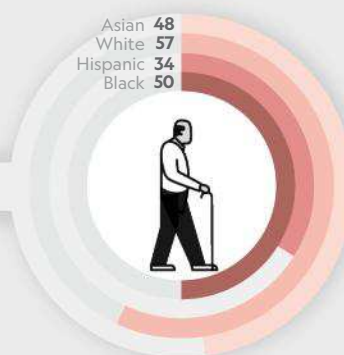
## ○ RENTING VS. OWNING

Homeownership rate, 2016



## ○ UNEQUAL RETIREMENT

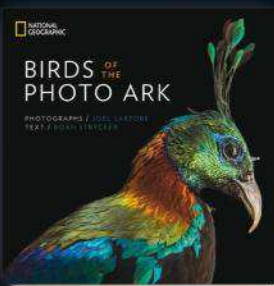
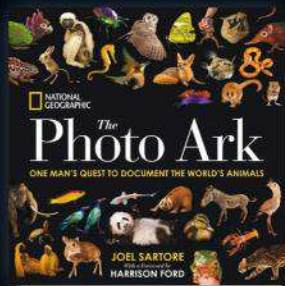
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## If You Purchased a Power Pressure Cooker, You Could Get Benefits from a Proposed Class Action Settlement

A proposed class action settlement has been preliminarily approved by a Court against Tristar Products, Inc. ("Defendant") involving certain models of pressure cookers.

### What is this about?

The lawsuit claims that certain models of Tristar pressure cookers may have defects including, 1) suddenly releasing steam while being opened; 2) the lid may be removed while still under pressure; 3) the pressure relief valve may inaccurately indicate pressure levels; 4) a faulty gasket may allow the lid to open despite pressure build up; 5) the unit may not seal properly; and/or 6) the pressure cooker can develop pressure when the lid is partially or improperly closed. Plaintiffs claim that the alleged defects diminish the original purchase price value and as a result class members may be entitled to a credit on their original purchase.

The Defendant denies these allegations. The Court has not ruled on this matter. Instead, the parties decided to settle.

### Who is a Class Member?

You may be a Class Member if you purchased, for personal use and not for resale, certain pressure cookers between March 1, 2013 and January 19, 2018. A complete list of the pressure cookers at issue is on the detailed notice found on the website below.

### What are the Benefits?

Settlement Class Members who timely submit a completed claim form and verify that they have watched, or read a transcript of, a safety video will be eligible for a \$72.50 credit redeemable towards one of the following products, subject to availability and possible substitution: 1) Power Cooker, a 10 qt. pressure cooker - Model No. PC-WAL4; 2) Power Air Fryer XL, a 5.3 qt. air fryer - Model No. AF-530; or 3) Copper Chef XL Precision Induction Cooktop Set, consisting of induction cooktop, 11" deep dish casserole pan with glass lid, fry basket, steam rack, 10" round pan with glass lid, and recipe book. Valid Class Members will also be eligible for a free one-year warranty extension for the pressure cooker they currently own. Visit the website for complete information on benefits.

### What are my rights?

You have a right to file a Claim, Object, Opt-Out, or do nothing. **File a claim.** To receive Benefits, you must submit a Claim Form online or by mail, by July 4, 2018. **Opt-Out.** You may Opt-Out from the settlement by June 4, 2018. You will keep your right to pursue a separate lawsuit about these claims, but you will not receive settlement Benefits. If you or anyone you know has suffered personal injuries or property damage as a result of one of the models of pressure cookers and wish to pursue an individual claim for those injuries and/or damage, then that Person(s) should Opt-Out of this settlement. **Object.** If you do not agree with the terms of the settlement, you may file an Objection, before June 4, 2018. Objection instructions are found on the website. **Do Nothing.** You will receive no Benefits and have no right to sue later for the Claims released by the settlement.

The Court will hold a Fairness Hearing in the courtroom of the Honorable James S. Gwin, in the Carl B. Stokes U.S. Court House, 801 West Superior Ave., Cleveland, OH 44113, on July 12, 2018 at 9:00 a.m., to decide whether to approve the settlement and to award Attorneys' Fees to be paid by Defendants, and Plaintiff incentive payments. The motion for fees and expenses will be posted on the website below after they are filed. You may attend this hearing, but you don't have to. Benefits will be issued to settlement Class Members only if the Court approves the settlement and after all appeals are resolved. **This notice is only a summary.**

For questions or complete information, please visit [www.powerpressurecookersettlement.com](http://www.powerpressurecookersettlement.com), or call toll free (844) 271-4784.

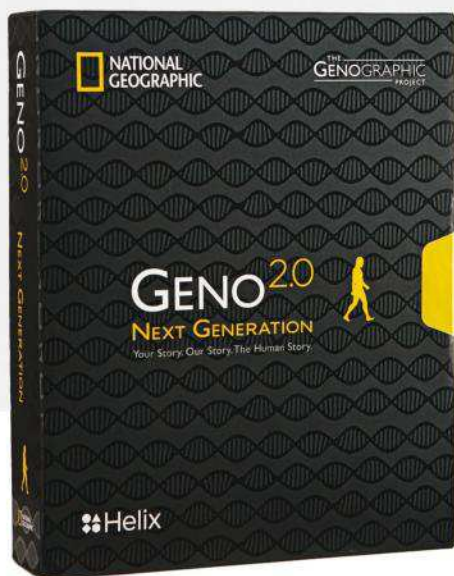


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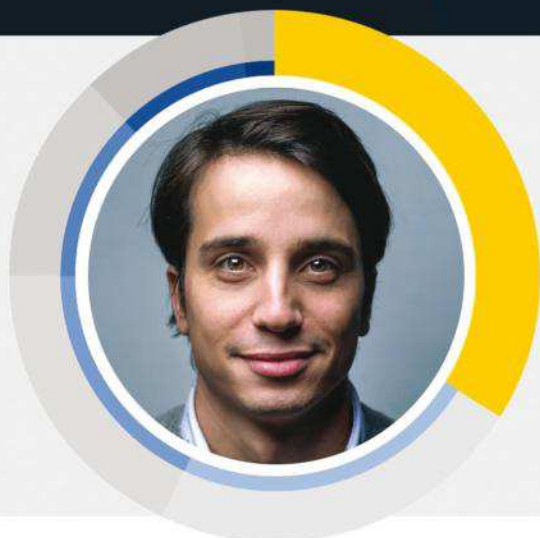
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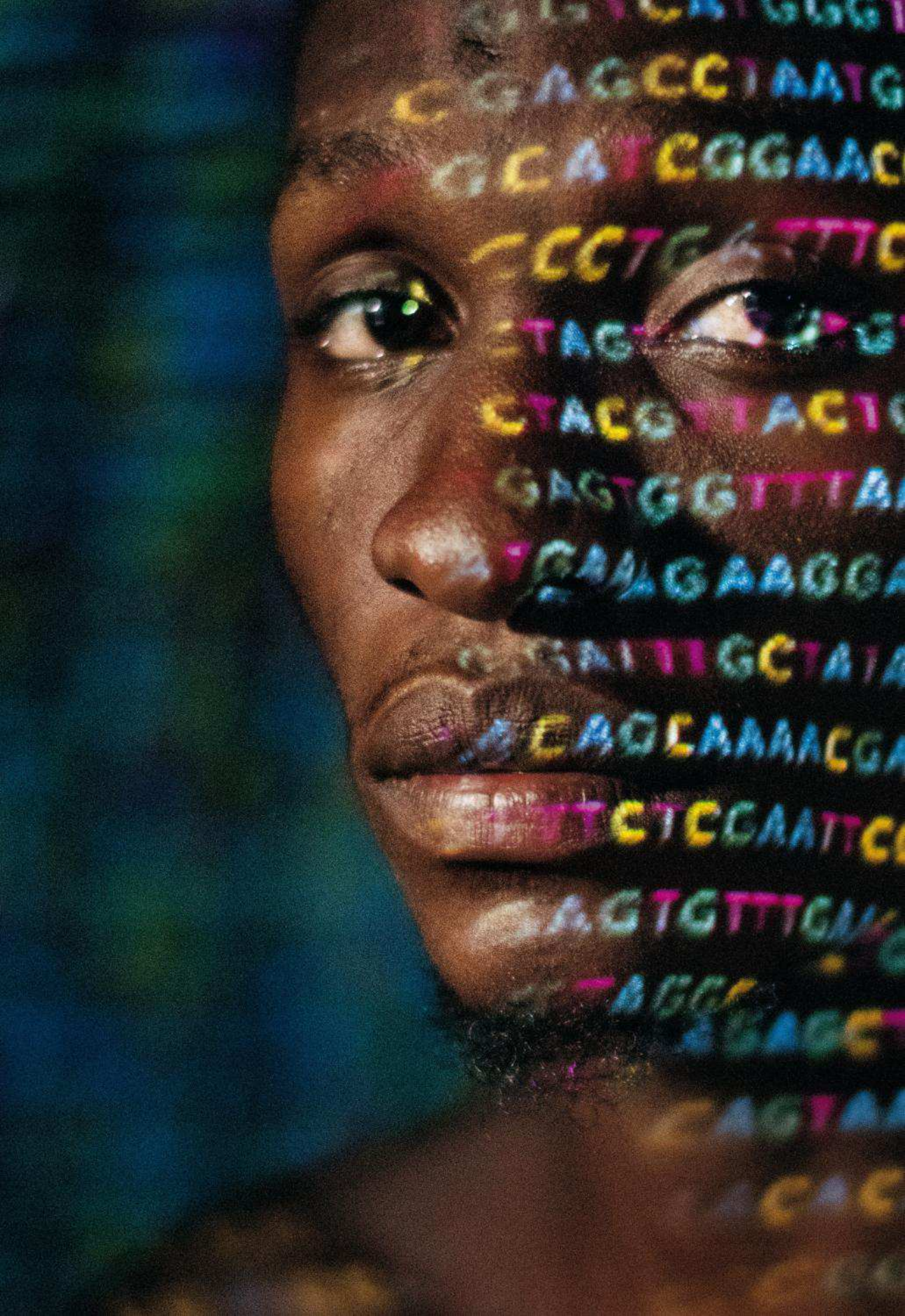
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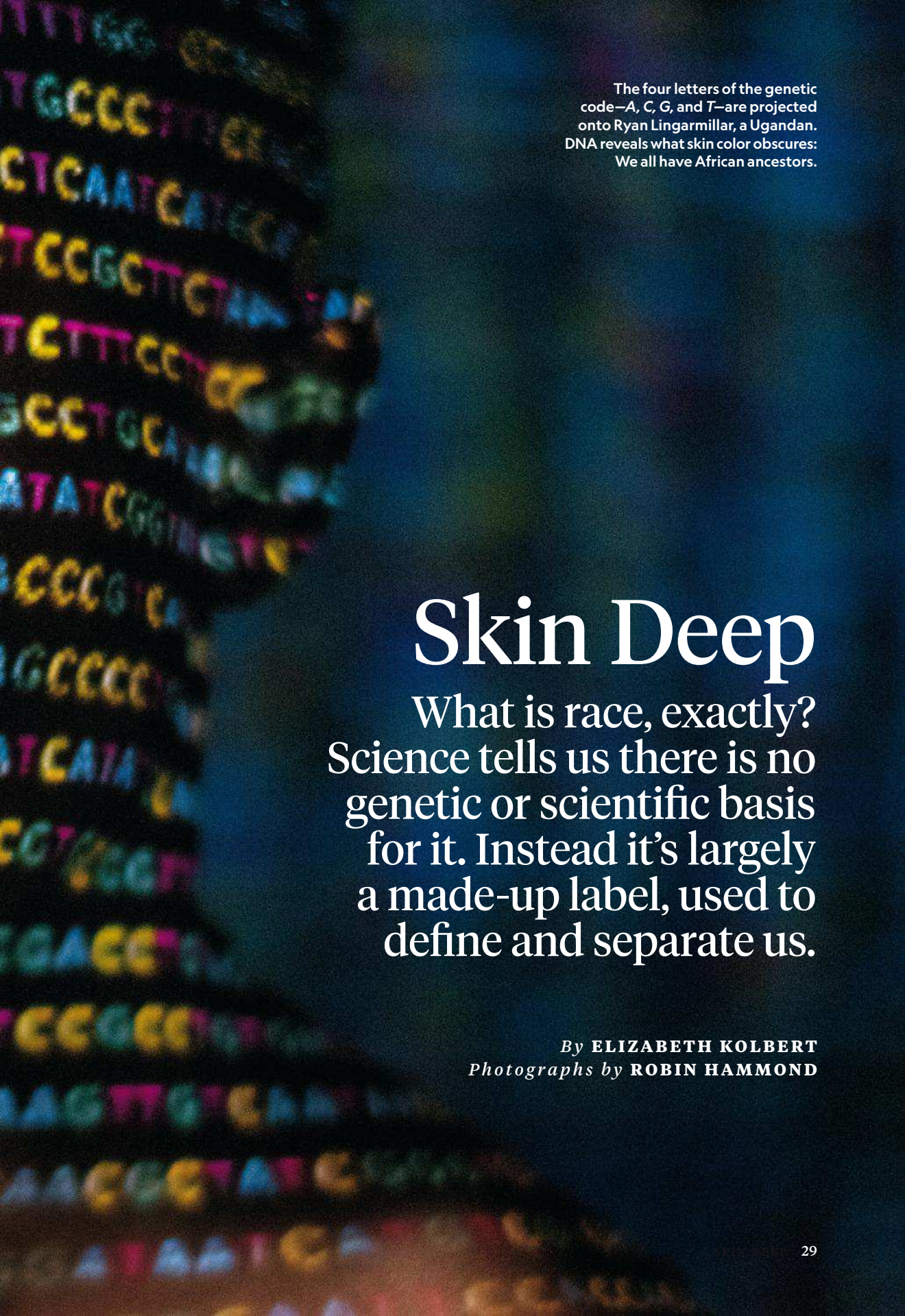
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The four letters of the genetic code—A, C, G, and T—are projected onto Ryan Lingarmillar, a Ugandan. DNA reveals what skin color obscures: We all have African ancestors.

# Skin Deep

What is race, exactly? Science tells us there is no genetic or scientific basis for it. Instead it's largely a made-up label, used to define and separate us.

By **ELIZABETH KOLBERT**  
*Photographs by* **ROBIN HAMMOND**



**In the first half of the 19th century, one of America’s most prominent scientists was a doctor named Samuel Morton. Morton lived in Philadelphia, and he collected skulls.**

He wasn’t choosy about his suppliers. He accepted skulls scavenged from battlefields and snatched from catacombs. One of his most famous craniums belonged to an Irishman who’d been sent as a convict to Tasmania (and ultimately hanged for killing and eating other convicts). With each skull Morton performed the same procedure: He stuffed it with pepper seeds—later he switched to lead shot—which he then decanted to ascertain the volume of the braincase.

Morton believed that people could be divided into five races and that these represented separate

acts of creation. The races had distinct characters, which corresponded to their place in a divinely determined hierarchy. Morton’s “craniometry” showed, he claimed, that whites, or “Caucasians,” were the most intelligent of the races. East Asians—Morton used the term “Mongolian”—though “ingenious” and “susceptible of cultivation,” were one step down. Next came Southeast Asians, followed by Native Americans. Blacks, or “Ethiopians,” were at the bottom. In the decades before the Civil War, Morton’s ideas were quickly taken up by the defenders of slavery.



“He had a lot of influence, particularly in the South,” says Paul Wolff Mitchell, an anthropologist at the University of Pennsylvania who is showing me the skull collection, now housed at the Penn Museum. We’re standing over the braincase of a particularly large-headed Dutchman who helped inflate Morton’s estimate of Caucasian capacities. When Morton died, in 1851, the *Charleston Medical Journal* in South Carolina praised him for “giving to the negro his true position as an inferior race.”

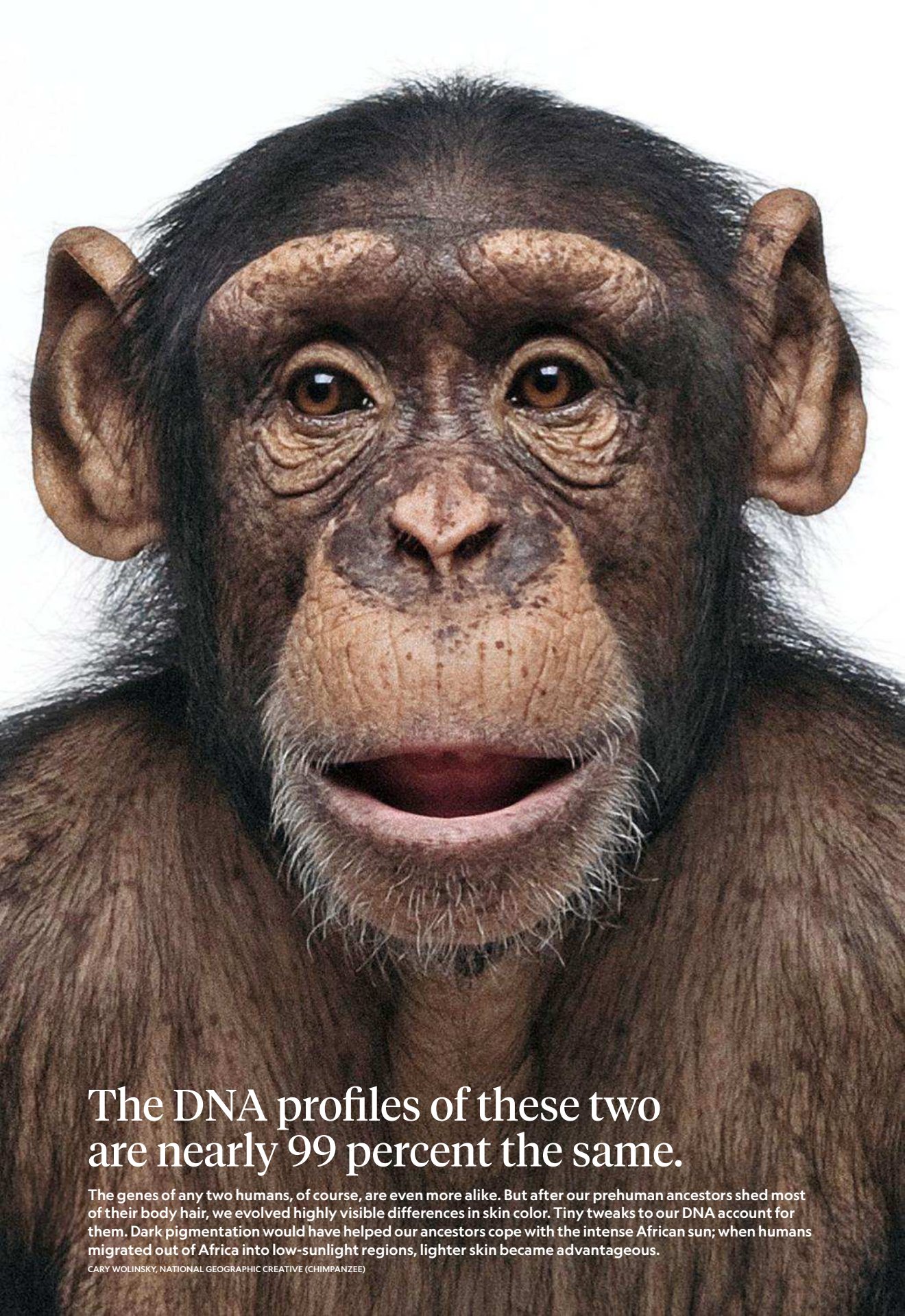
Today Morton is known as the father of scientific racism. So many of the horrors of the past few centuries can be traced to the idea that one race is inferior to another that a tour of his collection is a haunting experience. To an uncomfortable degree we still live with Morton’s legacy: Racial distinctions continue to shape our politics, our neighborhoods, and our sense of self.

This is the case even though what science actually has to tell us about race is just the opposite of what Morton contended.

Morton thought he’d identified immutable and inherited differences among people, but at

**Skulls from the collection of Samuel Morton, the father of scientific racism, illustrate his classification of people into five races—which arose, he claimed, from separate acts of creation. From left to right: a black woman and a white man, both American; an indigenous man from Mexico; a Chinese woman; and a Malaysian man.**

the time he was working—shortly before Charles Darwin put forth his theory of evolution and long before the discovery of DNA—scientists had no idea how traits were passed on. Researchers who have since looked at people at the genetic level now say that the whole category of race is misconceived. Indeed, when scientists set out to assemble the first complete human genome, which was a composite of several individuals, they deliberately gathered samples from people who self-identified as members of different races. In June 2000, when the results were announced at a White House ceremony, Craig Venter, a pioneer of DNA sequencing, observed, “The concept of race has no genetic or scientific basis.”



## The DNA profiles of these two are nearly 99 percent the same.

The genes of any two humans, of course, are even more alike. But after our prehuman ancestors shed most of their body hair, we evolved highly visible differences in skin color. Tiny tweaks to our DNA account for them. Dark pigmentation would have helped our ancestors cope with the intense African sun; when humans migrated out of Africa into low-sunlight regions, lighter skin became advantageous.

CARY WOLINSKY, NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC CREATIVE (CHIMPANZEE)





OVER THE PAST FEW DECADES, genetic research has revealed two deep truths about people. The first is that all humans are closely related—more closely related than all chimps, even though there are many more humans around today. Everyone has the same collection of genes, but with the exception of identical twins, everyone has slightly different versions of some of them. Studies of this genetic diversity have allowed scientists to reconstruct a kind of family tree of human populations. That has revealed the second deep truth: In a very real sense, all people alive today are Africans.

Our species, *Homo sapiens*, evolved in Africa—no one is sure of the exact time or place. The most recent fossil find, from Morocco, suggests that anatomically modern human features began appearing as long as 300,000 years ago. For the next 200,000 years or so, we remained in Africa, but already during that period, groups began to move to different parts of the continent and become isolated from one another—in effect founding new populations.

In humans, as in all species, genetic changes are the result of random mutations—tiny tweaks to DNA, the code of life. Mutations occur at a more or less constant rate, so the longer a group persists, handing down its genes generation after generation, the more tweaks these genes will accumulate. Meanwhile, the longer two groups are separated, the more distinctive tweaks they will acquire.

By analyzing the genes of present-day Africans,

researchers have concluded that the Khoe-San, who now live in southern Africa, represent one of the oldest branches of the human family tree. The Pygmies of central Africa also have a very long history as a distinct group. What this means is that the deepest splits in the human family aren't between what are usually thought of as different races—whites, say, or blacks or Asians or Native Americans. They're between African populations such as the Khoe-San and the Pygmies, who spent tens of thousands of years separated from one another even before humans left Africa.

ALL NON-AFRICANS TODAY, the genetics tell us, are descended from a few thousand humans who left Africa maybe 60,000 years ago. These migrants were most closely related to groups that today live in East Africa, including the Hadza of Tanzania. Because they were just a small subset of Africa's population, the migrants took with them only a fraction of its genetic diversity.

Somewhere along the way, perhaps in the Middle East, the travelers met and had sex with another human species, the Neanderthals; farther east they encountered yet another, the Denisovans. It's believed that both species evolved in Eurasia from a hominin that had migrated out of Africa much earlier. Some scientists also believe the exodus 60,000 years ago was actually the second wave of modern humans to leave Africa. (See map on page 41.) If so, judging from our genomes today, the second wave swamped the first.

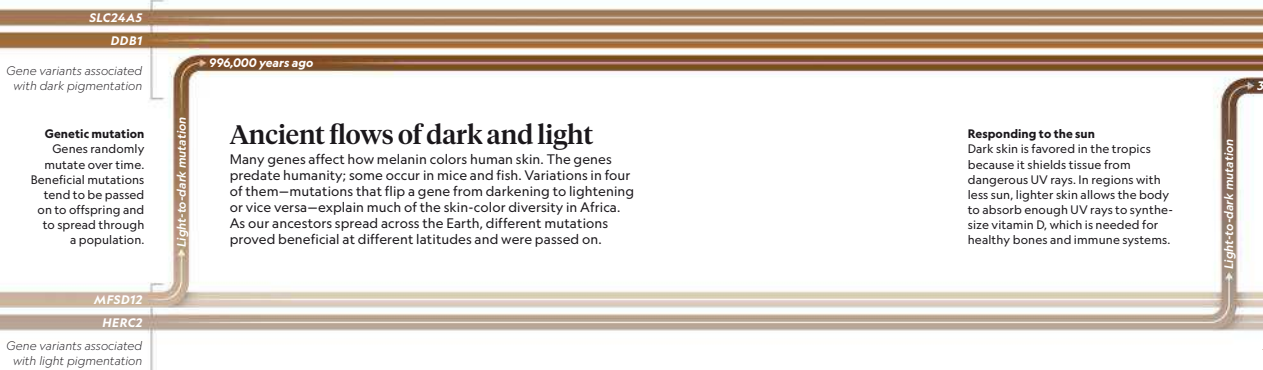
In what was, relatively speaking, a great rush,

the offspring of all these migrants spread around the world. By 50,000 years ago they had reached Australia. By 45,000 years ago they were settled in Siberia, and by 15,000 years ago they had reached South America. As they moved to different parts of the world, they formed new groups that became geographically isolated from one another and, in the process, acquired distinctive sets of genetic mutations.

Most of these tweaks were neither harmful nor helpful. But occasionally a mutation that turned out to be advantageous in a new environment. Under the pressure of natural selection, such mutations spread quickly through the local population. At high altitudes, for instance, oxygen levels are low, so for people moving into the Ethiopian highlands, Tibet, or the Andean Altiplano, there was a survival advantage on mutations that helped them cope with rarefied air. Similarly, Inuit people, who lived in a cold, ed a marine-based diet high in fatty acids, had genetic tweaks that helped them adapt to the cold.

Sometimes it's clear that natural selection favored a mutation, but it's not clear why. One example is the case with a variant of a gene called *EDAR* (pronounced ee-dar). Most people of European and Native American ancestry possess one copy of the variant, known as *EDAR-V393A*; many possess two. But it's rare among Africans of African and European descent.

At the University of Pennsylvania's School of Medicine, geneticist Yana Kucenka has equipped mice with the East Asian variant of *EDAR* in hopes of understanding why



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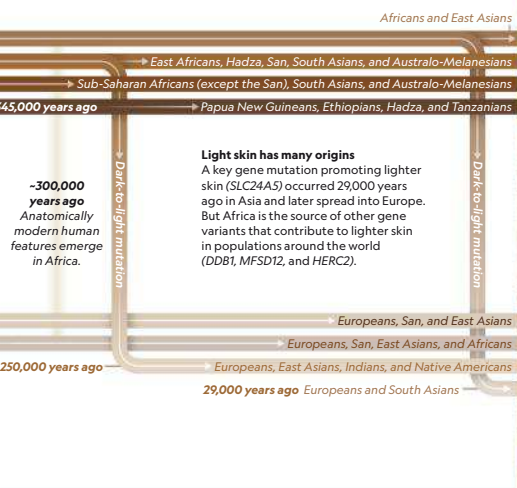
“They’re cute, aren’t they?” she says, opening the cage to show me. The mice look ordinary, with sleek brown coats and shiny black eyes. But examined under a microscope, they are different from their equally cute cousins in subtle yet significant ways. Their hair strands are thicker; their sweat glands are more numerous; and the fat pads around their mammary glands are smaller.

Kamberov’s mice help explain why some East Asians and Native Americans have thicker hair and more sweat glands. (EDAR’s effect on human breasts is unclear.) But they don’t provide an evolutionary reason. Perhaps, Kamberov speculates, the ancestors of contemporary East Asians at some point encountered climate conditions that made more sweat glands useful. Or maybe thicker hair helped them ward off parasites. Or it could be that 370A produced other benefits she’s yet to discover and the changes she has identified were, in effect, just tagalongs. Genetics frequently works like this: A tiny tweak can have many disparate effects. Only one may be useful—and it may outlive the conditions that made it so, the way families hand down old photos long past the point when anyone remembers who’s in them.

“Unless you have a time machine, you’re not going to know,” Kamberov sighs.

DNA IS OFTEN COMPARED TO A TEXT, with the letters standing for chemical bases—A for adenine, C for cytosine, G for guanine, and T for thymine. The human genome consists of three billion base pairs—page after page of A’s, C’s, G’s,

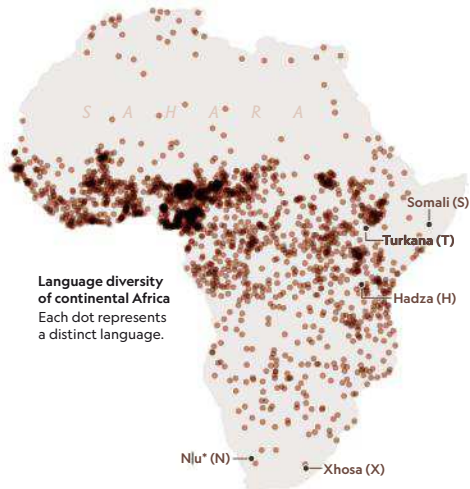
Hadza hunter-gatherers of Tanzania, such as Ondoshi Stephano, are among the closest living relatives of the humans who first left Africa.



~300,000 years ago Anatomically modern human features emerge in Africa.

# There's more diversity in Africa than on all the other continents combined.

That's because modern humans originated in Africa and have lived there the longest. They've had time to evolve enormous genetic diversity—which extends to skin color. Researchers who study it sometimes use Africa's linguistic diversity—it has more than 2,000 languages (see map)—as a guide. Photographer Robin Hammond followed their lead, visiting five representative language communities. His portraits span the color spectrum from Neilton Vaalbooi (top left), a Khoes-San boy from South Africa, to Akatorot Yelle (bottom right), a Turkana girl from Kenya. "There is no homogeneous African race," says geneticist Sarah Tishkoff of the University of Pennsylvania. "It doesn't exist." The prehistoric humans who left Africa some 60,000 years ago—giving rise over time to the other peoples of the world—reflected only a fraction of Africa's diversity.



1. Neilton Vaalbooi (N), 2. Petrus Vaalbooi (N), 3. Khadar Abdullahi (S), 4. Sadam Abdirisak (S), 5. Askania Saidi (H), 6. Mohamed Ali (S), 7. Helena Hamisi (H), 8. Kooli Naperit (T), 9. David Vaalbooi (N), 10. Sisipho Menze (X), 11. Ayub Abdullahi (S), 12. Bianca Springbok (N), 13. Xolani Mantyi (X), 14. Makaranga Pandisha (H), 15. Erinyok Even (T), 16. Isaac Adams (N), 17. Chahida van Nesel (N), 18. Gnet Seelkoei (N), 19. Siphelo Mazono (X), 20. Piega Mukoa (H), 21. Zacharia Sangs (H), 22. Tulsia Ngxukuma (X), 23. Johanna Koper (N), 24. Abdillahi Mohamed (S), 25. Monwabisi Makoma (X), 26. Gelmesa Robe (S), 27. Palanjo Kaunda (H), 28. Abdillahi Said (S), 29. Ejore Elipan Abong (T), 30. Akatorot Yelle (T)

\* Nlu is one of many Khoes-San languages.

NGM MAPS. SOURCES: GLOTTOLOG 3.1, MAX PLANCK INSTITUTE FOR THE SCIENCE OF HUMAN HISTORY, SARAH TISHKOFF, UNIVERSITY OF PENNSYLVANIA, BRENDA HENRI, STONY BROOK UNIVERSITY, NEW YORK, RICHARD E.W. BERL, COLORADO STATE UNIVERSITY



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and *T*'s—divided into roughly 20,000 genes. The tweak that gives East Asians thicker hair is a single base change in a single gene, from a *T* to a *C*.

Similarly, the mutation that's most responsible for giving Europeans lighter skin is a single tweak in a gene known as *SLC24A5*, which consists of roughly 20,000 base pairs. In one position, where most sub-Saharan Africans have a *G*, Europeans have an *A*. About a decade ago a pathologist and geneticist named Keith Cheng, at Penn State College of Medicine, discovered the mutation by studying zebrafish that had been bred to have lighter stripes. The fish, it turned out, possessed a mutation in a pigment gene analogous to the one that is mutated in Europeans.

Studying DNA extracted from ancient bones, paleogeneticists have found that the *G*-to-*A* substitution was introduced into western Europe relatively recently—about 8,000 years ago—by people migrating from the Middle East, who also brought a newfangled technology: farming. That means the people already in Europe—hunter-gatherers who created the spectacular cave paintings at Lascaux, for example—probably were not white but brown. The ancient DNA suggests that many of those dark-skinned Europeans also had blue eyes, a combination rarely seen today.

“What the genetics shows is that mixture and displacement have happened again and again and that our pictures of past ‘racial structures’ are almost always wrong,” says David Reich, a Harvard University paleogeneticist whose new book on the subject is called *Who We Are and How We Got Here*. There are no fixed traits associated with specific geographic locations, Reich says, because as often as isolation has created differences among populations, migration and mixing have blurred or erased them.

Across the world today, skin color is highly variable. Much of the difference correlates with latitude. Near the Equator lots of sunlight makes dark skin a useful shield against ultraviolet radiation; toward the poles, where the problem is too little sun, paler skin promotes the production of vitamin D. Several genes work together to determine skin tone, and different groups may possess any number of combinations of different tweaks. Among Africans, some people, such as the Mursi of Ethiopia, have skin that's almost ebony, while others, such as the Khoes-Sans, have skin the color of copper. Many dark-skinned East Africans, researchers were surprised to

learn, possess the light-skinned variant of *SLC24A5*. (It seems to have been introduced to Africa, just as it was to Europe, from the Middle East.) East Asians, for their part, generally have light skin but possess the dark-skinned version of the gene. Cheng has been using zebrafish to try to figure out why. “It's not simple,” he says.

When people speak about race, usually they seem to be referring to skin color and, at the same time, to something more than skin color. This is the legacy of people such as Morton, who developed the “science” of race to suit his own prejudices and got the actual science totally wrong. Science today tells us that the visible differences between peoples are accidents of history. They reflect how our ancestors dealt with sun exposure, and not much else.

“We often have this idea that if I know your skin color, I know X, Y, and Z about you,” says Heather Norton, a molecular anthropologist at the University of Cincinnati who studies pigmentation. “So I think it can be very powerful to explain to people that all these changes we see, it's just because I have an *A* in my genome and she has a *G*.”

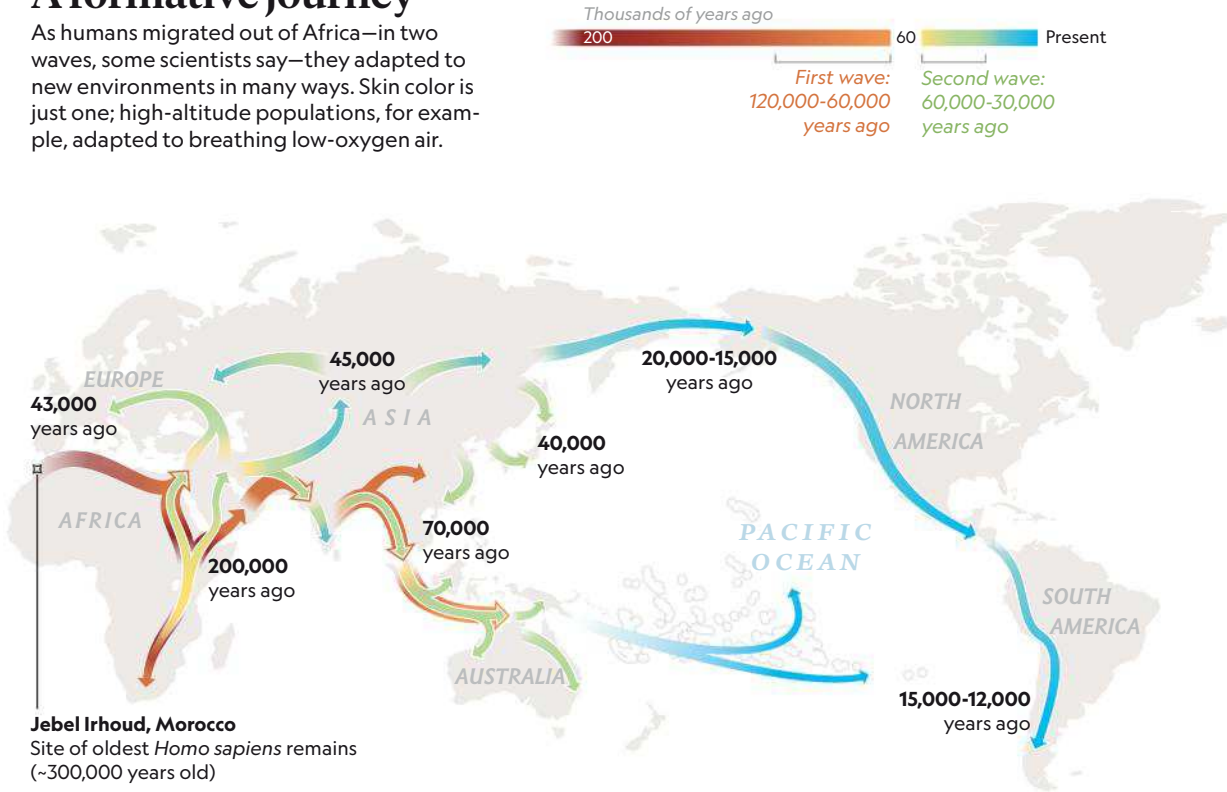
ABOUT AN HOUR AWAY from Morton's collection, at West Chester University, Anita Foeman directs the DNA Discussion Project. On a bright fall morning, she's addressing the latest participants in the project—a dozen students of varying hues, each peering at a laptop screen. A few weeks earlier the students had filled out questionnaires about their ancestry. What did they believe their background to be? The students had then submitted saliva samples for genetic testing. Now, via their computers, they are getting back their results. Their faces register their reactions.

One young woman, whose family has lived in India as far back as anyone can recall, is shocked to discover some of her ancestry is Irish. Another young woman, who has grown up believing one of her grandparents was Native American, is disappointed to learn this isn't so. A third describes herself as “confused.” “I was expecting a lot more Middle Eastern,” she says.

Foeman, a professor of communications, is accustomed to such responses. She started the DNA Discussion Project in 2006 because she was interested in stories, both the kind that families tell and the kind that genes tell. From early on in the project, it was clear these were often not the same. A young man who identified as biracial was angry

# A formative journey

As humans migrated out of Africa—in two waves, some scientists say—they adapted to new environments in many ways. Skin color is just one; high-altitude populations, for example, adapted to breathing low-oxygen air.



to discover his background was, in fact, almost entirely European. Several students who had been raised in Christian households were surprised to learn some of their ancestors were Jewish.

“All these stories that have been suppressed pop out in the genes,” Foeman says. Even Foeman, who identifies as African-American, was caught off guard by her results. They showed that some of her ancestors were from Ghana, others from Scandinavia.

“I grew up in the 1960s, when light skin was really a big deal,” she explains. “So I think of myself as being pretty brown skinned. I was surprised that a quarter of my background was European.”

“It really brought home this idea that we make race up,” she says.

Of course, just because race is “made up” doesn’t make it any less powerful. To a disturbing extent, race still determines people’s perceptions, their opportunities, and their experiences. It is enshrined in the U.S. census, which last time it was taken, in 2010, asked Americans to choose their race from a list that reflects the history of the concept; choices included “White,” “Black,”

“American Indian,” “Asian Indian,” “Chinese,” “Japanese,” and “ Samoan.” Racial distinctions were written into the Jim Crow laws of the post-Reconstruction South and are now written into statutes like the Civil Rights Act, which prohibits discrimination on the basis of race or color. To the victims of racism, it’s small consolation to say that the category has no scientific basis.

Genetic sequencing, which has allowed researchers to trace the path of human migration and now allows individuals to trace their own ancestry, has introduced new ways of thinking about human diversity. Or at least so Foeman hopes. The DNA Discussion Project gives participants insight into their own background, which is generally a lot more complicated than they’d been led to believe. And this, in turn, opens up a conversation about the long, tangled, and often brutal history that all of us ultimately share.

“That race is a human construction doesn’t mean that we don’t fall into different groups or there’s no variation,” Foeman says. “But if we made racial categories up, maybe we can make new categories that function better.” □







## Even today Neanderthals are in most of us.

In Düsseldorf, Germany, a sculpture from the nearby Neanderthal Museum draws curiosity and recognition from passersby. Some of the first humans to leave Africa met and had sex with Neanderthals. As a result, all non-Africans today carry a small amount of Neanderthal DNA. Those genes may boost their immune systems and vitamin D levels but also their risk of schizophrenia—and excessive belly fat.

RECONSTRUCTION BY KENNIS & KENNIS  
PHOTOGRAPHED WITH ASSISTANCE FROM NEANDERTHAL MUSEUM, GERMANY

DNA TESTING

# Forget race. Ancestry is the real story—and it's much more interesting.

32%

Northern  
European

28%

Southern  
European

21%

Sub-Saharan  
African

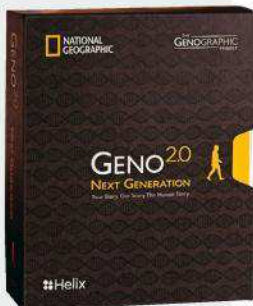
14%

Southwest  
Asian/North  
African

An interest in who begat us goes back at least to the Bible. These days the genealogical impulse is buttressed by modern genetics, which weaves individual stories into the grand migration of humankind. These six people had their DNA tested with National Geographic's kit (see below). The results indicate essentially the same "racial" heritage, in the percentages shown above. But their experiences are unique. Brenda Yurkoski (lower left) knew before the test—which names ancestral populations, not individuals—that her list of ancestors includes Thomas Jefferson and Sally Hemings, Jefferson's slave and mistress. "It was my fourth great-grandfather who came up with the formula to determine whether you were black or whether you were white in America," she says. "I'm what you would have called a quadroon."

## WHAT'S YOUR ANCESTRY?

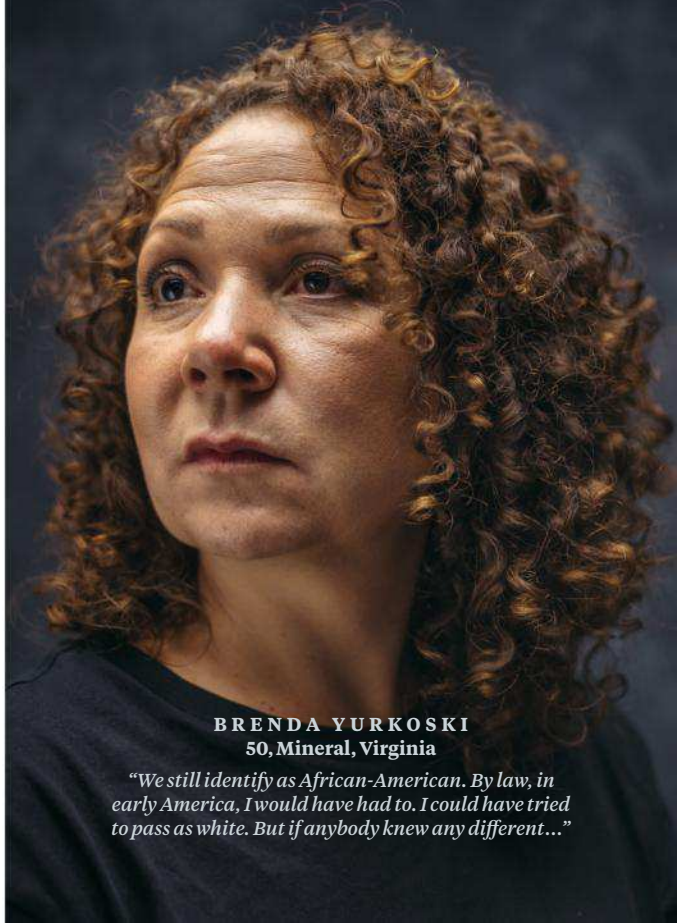
The Geno 2.0 DNA Ancestry Kit breaks down a person's ancestry by region, going back to the time when all our ancestors were in Africa. More than 830,000 people have sent in saliva samples. Learn more [at natgeo.com/GenoDNA](http://atnatgeo.com/GenoDNA).



CAM MEYER

28, Santa Monica, California

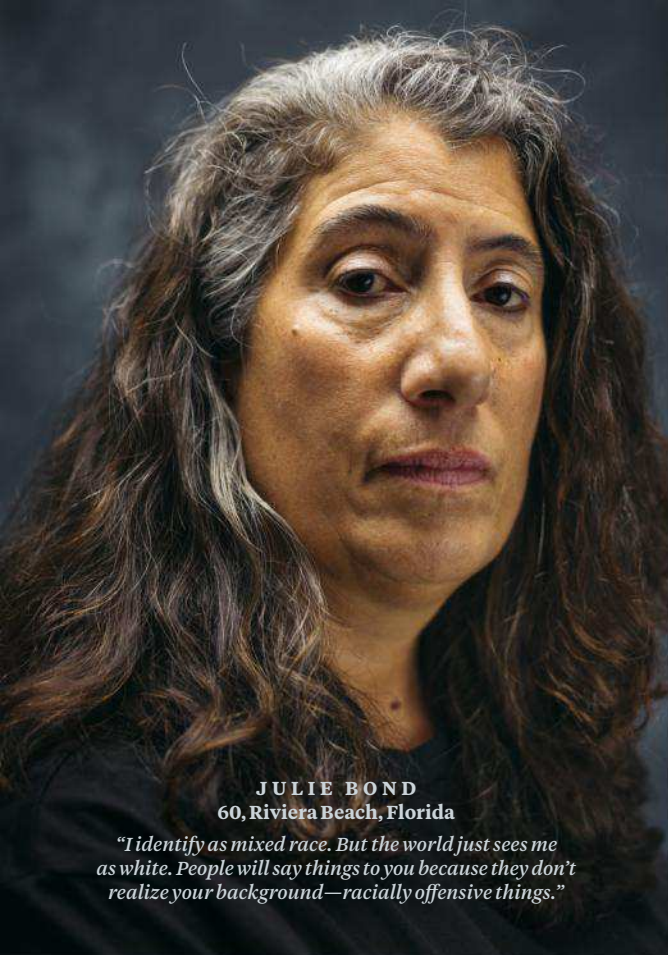
*"People have always asked me where I'm from, what my race is, and I was not totally sure. I have a very unique look. So I thought it'd be cool to find out."*



BRENDA YURKOSKI

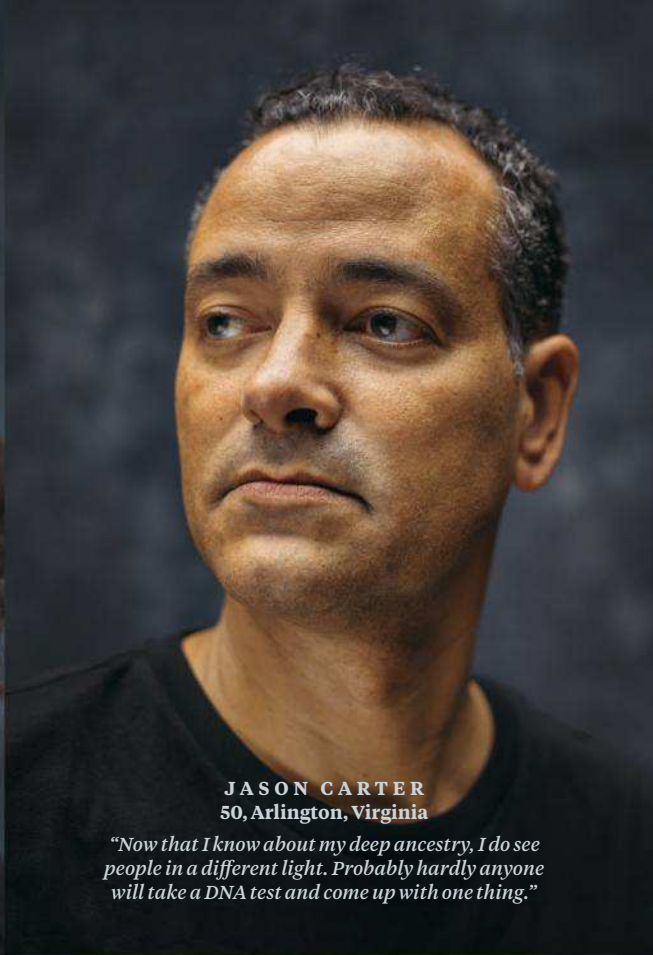
50, Mineral, Virginia

*"We still identify as African-American. By law, in early America, I would have had to. I could have tried to pass as white. But if anybody knew any different..."*



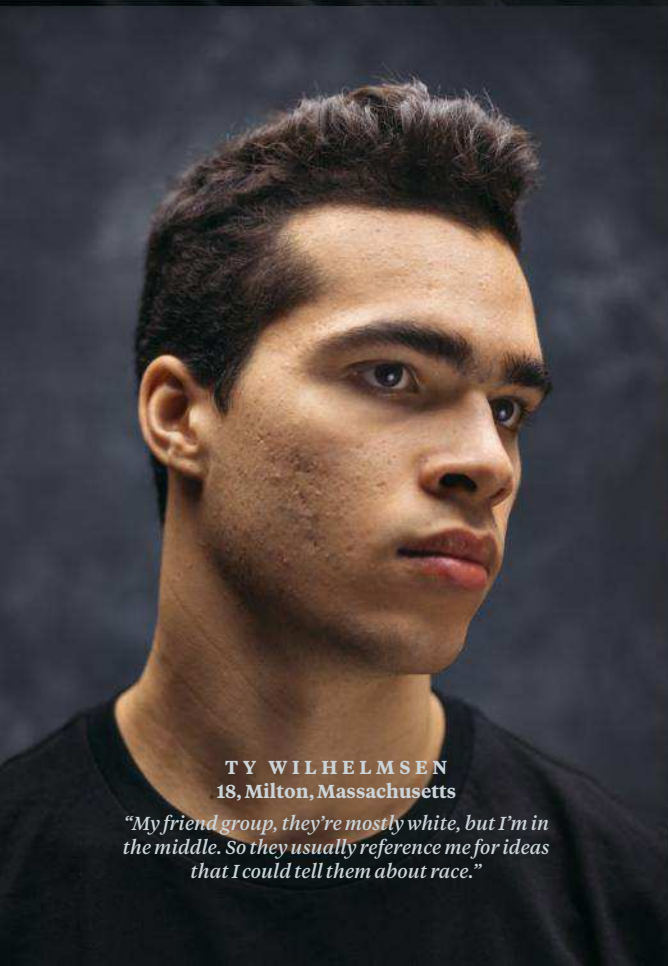
**JULIE BOND**  
60, Riviera Beach, Florida

*"I identify as mixed race. But the world just sees me as white. People will say things to you because they don't realize your background—racially offensive things."*



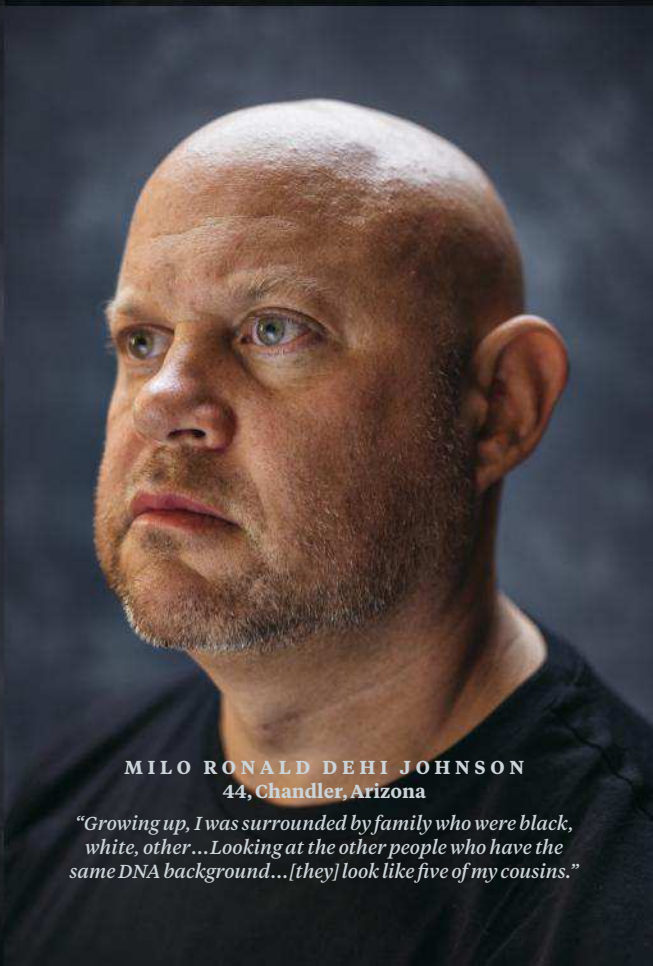
**JASON CARTER**  
50, Arlington, Virginia

*"Now that I know about my deep ancestry, I do see people in a different light. Probably hardly anyone will take a DNA test and come up with one thing."*



**TY WILHELMSSEN**  
18, Milton, Massachusetts

*"My friend group, they're mostly white, but I'm in the middle. So they usually reference me for ideas that I could tell them about race."*



**MILO RONALD DEHI JOHNSON**  
44, Chandler, Arizona

*"Growing up, I was surrounded by family who were black, white, other... Looking at the other people who have the same DNA background... [they] look like five of my cousins."*

# THE THINGS THAT



Near Johannesburg, South Africa, a highway separates two starkly contrasting communities: the middle-class, mostly white Primrose neighborhood and the Makause settlement, where unemployed gold miners took over land in the 1990s. Almost all its residents are black. JOHNNY MILLER

**WE'RE WIRED AT BIRTH TO TELL US FROM THEM  
AND TO FAVOR OUR OWN GROUP. CAN SCIENCE OFFER A SOLUTION?**



**DIVIDE US**



During the Unite the Right rally in Charlottesville, Virginia, on August 12, 2017, alt-right supporters block entrance by counterprotesters to the park that's home to a statue of Confederate general Robert E. Lee.



Fights soon broke out between the groups. Later a counterprotester was killed by a rally participant who police say intentionally drove his car into a crowd.

By

**DAVID BERREBY**

*Photographs by*

**JOHN STANMEYER**

**D**espite their many differences, Solomon Igbawua and Dahiru Bala were close friends. It began when they were schoolboys, running back and forth between Igbawua's village and Bala's settlement, only a mile or two apart in eastern Nigeria's Benue state. They expected their friendship would endure the rest of their lives.

Compact and barrel-chested, Igbawua, now 40, is a Christian and a member of the Tiv, who have farmed Benue's gently rolling green plains for centuries. Tall and thin, Bala, 42, is a Hausa Muslim. His people—the tightly intertwined Hausa and Fulani—live by herding sinewy long-horned cattle that range over much of western Africa. In many places such differences—of ethnicity, religion, language, culture, politics—are deadly. A few hundred miles to the north of where I met the men, Boko Haram wages war against all who don't adhere to its version of Islam. Elsewhere in West Africa and beyond, herdsman and farmers engage in violent attacks over access to resources. And other groups (races, tribes, nations, religions, sects) are locked in other conflicts throughout the world.

Until recently, though, that did not happen in Zongo, Igbawua's village, or Daudu, where Bala lives. For most of their lives, they told me, there was enough good land for everyone. If cattle trampled a farmer's field or a herder found his route to a stream cut off by a new fence, there were ways to settle those kinds of quarrels. "There was peace here, and harmony," says Elizabeth Anyom, a Tiv.

But as the two friends grew into men with children of their own, Benue's population rose. A warming climate dried up lands to the north,

sending more herders south. Good land became scarcer. More and more often farmers found crops ruined by herds, and herders found their cattle routes choked off with fences or newly planted fields. Relations were no longer free and easy among farmers and herders, Hausa-Fulani and other groups.

Still, Zongo and Daudu kept to their peaceful shared routines. No one thought conflict could happen here, says Igbawua's wife, Katrin.


And then it did.

In 2014 "the crisis" fell upon the two communities. The lines between tribes, religions, and culture turned to walls—and being on the wrong side could be fatal. Rumors would spread; then there were raids and counterraids. Crops were ruined; animals were slaughtered. The Tiv village was burned. Men and women were killed.

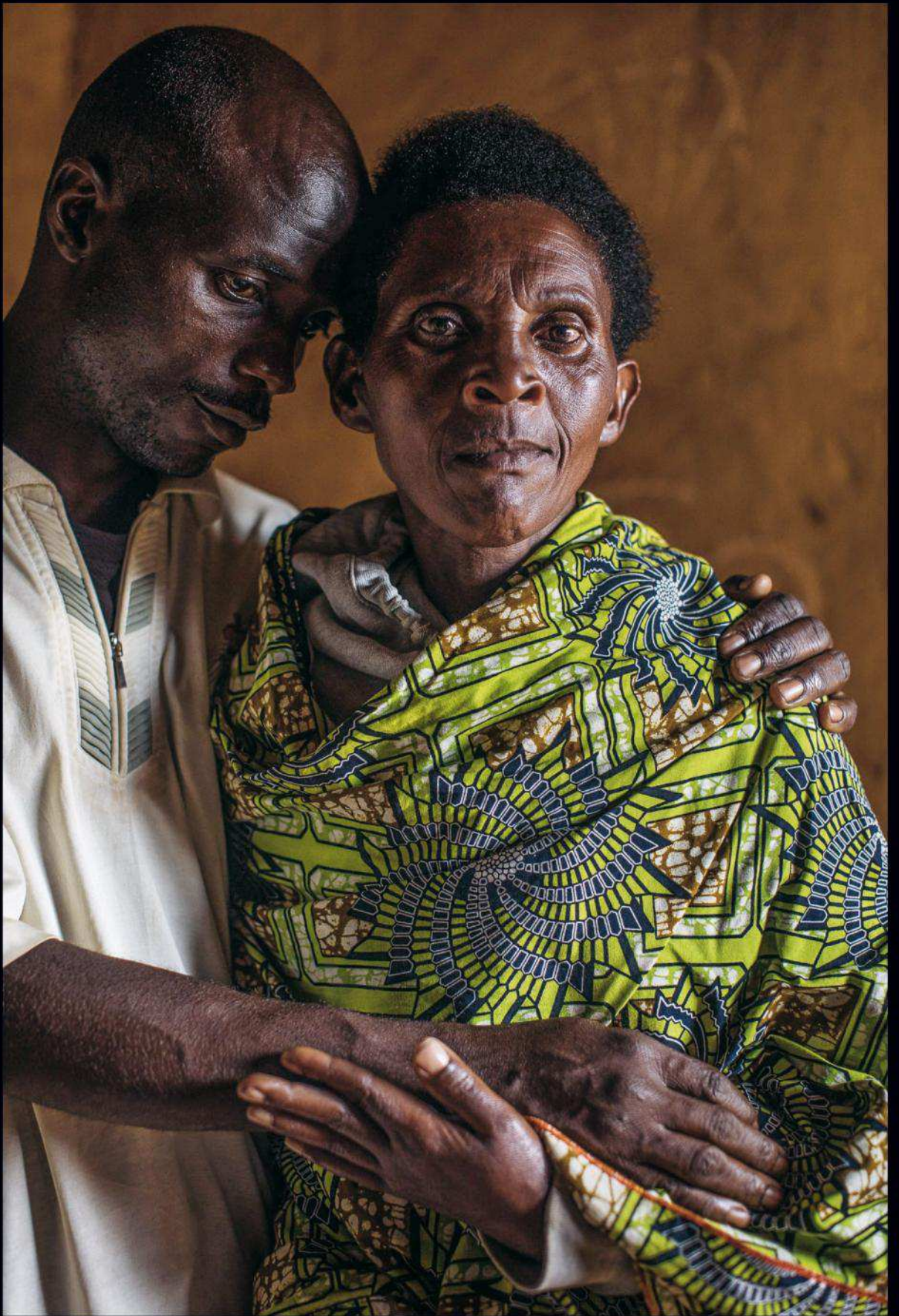
Igbawua and Bala told me they didn't attack anyone, but once groups are pitted against one another, that scarcely matters. During the crisis most Tiv farmers acted as if all herders were the same, and vice versa.

The crisis changed people's norms of behavior. Getting along wasn't valued; getting revenge was. "I thought they should not take the law into their own hands," Bala says. "But I didn't have the courage to approach my own people and tell them that." He and Igbawua became refugees, visiting their own homes only briefly and during the day, watching out for ambushes.

It's a common misfortune around the world: People get along well enough for decades, even centuries, across lines of race or religion or culture. Then, suddenly, the neighbors aren't people you respect, invite to dinner, trade favors with, or marry. Those once familiar faces are now Them, the Enemy, the Other. And in that clash of groups, individuality vanishes and empathy dries up, as

  
Maria Uwambaje, who lost four of her children during Rwanda's 1994 genocide, stands with Boniface Twagiramungu, who led killers to those children. Uwambaje has forgiven Twagiramungu. A program led by the Karuna Center for Peacebuilding is helping such perpetrators and victims heal their trauma.







**HUTU**

&

**TUTSI**

Aggravated by a legacy of colonialism, ethnic conflict erupted into genocidal slaughter.

### **HISTORY**

Hutu, Tutsi, and other peoples peacefully shared the territory that is now Rwanda for centuries. German and later Belgian colonial administrators stoked ethnic resentment by favoring one group over the other in pursuit of their own colonial interests.

### **DIFFERENCES**

Strife along Tutsi-Hutu lines bedeviled the nation even before its independence from Belgium in 1961. In the early 1990s Rwanda was ruled by a Hutu-dominated government that was fighting a civil war against Tutsi insurgents. The conflict heightened tribal thinking on both sides.

### **CONFLICT SPARK**

The assassination of the Hutu president of Rwanda in April 1994 became the pretext for extremist Hutu to call for the slaughter of Tutsi and moderate Hutu. Some 800,000 Rwandans were killed over the following three months.

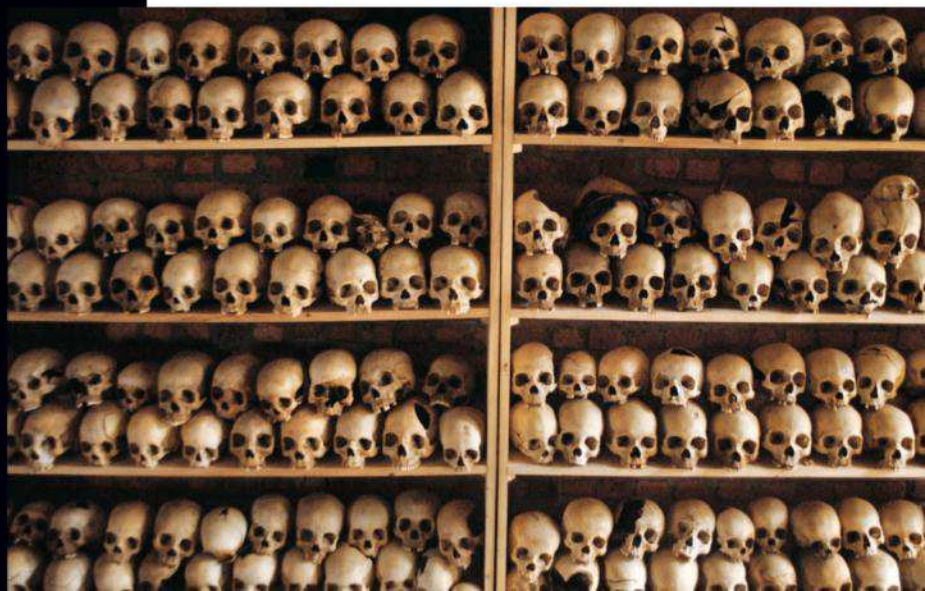
### **EFFORTS TO DEFUSE**

Rwanda's government works to suppress Us-versus-Them thinking, prohibiting pejorative use of the terms "Hutu" and "Tutsi." Schoolchildren learn the doctrine of *Abanyarwanda*, which promotes a single national identity over ethnic divisions. Adults must participate in *Umuganda*, a monthly day of service in which everyone in a village works together on a shared project.

does trust. It can happen between herders and farmers in Nigeria or between native-born people and immigrants in France or the United States. The situations are very different, and the differences are important. But so is the shared root of their problems: People everywhere are "identity crazed," as the evolutionary psychologist John Tooby has put it. We can't help it: We're wired from birth to tell Us from Them. And we inevitably (and sometimes unconsciously) favor Us—especially when we feel threatened.

Of course, humans share that trait with many other creatures, from ants to salmon to macaques. What other creatures almost never do, though, is change their group perceptions and actions. The birds and bees kept to their tribes when Yugoslavs turned into warring Croats, Serbs, and Bosnians. Only humans—Hutu and Tutsi—could decide they are no longer countrymen, after peacefully sharing a homeland for centuries. Only humans can switch from feeling united as one American nation to feeling divided between conservative red states and liberal blue ones.

Our capacity to change our perceptions also offers some hope, because it permits people to shift in the direction of more inclusion, more justice, more peace. In Nigeria and other places around the world, communities torn apart by group conflict are putting themselves back together with help from a surprising source: scientists



who study the mind. Their methods are also helping to improve community relations with police in Toledo, Indianapolis, and other U.S. cities.

**I** AM A LEOPARD. Jay Van Bavel, a neuroscientist at New York University who studies group identity, gave me that label last summer when I was lying in an fMRI scanner near his office. While in the machine I was shown photos of faces—12 young white men and 12 young black men. The scanner tracked my brain’s activity as I connected these individuals to group identities. Having been raised in the United States, I have lived with my country’s racial categories all my life, and it wasn’t difficult to do one of my experimental tasks: classify each face according to its skin color as either black or white. However, I also had to work with another set of categories. The men in the photos were on one of two teams, I was told: Tigers or Leopards. The screen told me who was on which team and drilled me on the details until I had it down. But I wasn’t a neutral observer: I’d been told that I was a Leopard.

My scanner tasks (based on an experiment Van Bavel and his colleagues conducted in 2008) allowed Van Bavel to compare my brain’s activity as it worked, first with a familiar and consequential group identity (race in America) and then with a group identity that was effectively meaningless.

Like the brains in the actual experiment, mine lit up differently depending on whether I perceived an in-group face (for me, a Leopards team member) or an out-group (Tiger) face. For example, my orbitofrontal cortex, a brain region associated with liking, sparked up more when I saw a face from my in-group. So did the fusiform gyrus, a region tied to processing the identity of faces.

**In Ntarama, Rwanda, skulls of genocide victims line shelves of a church where 5,000 people were killed. In post-conflict societies, remembering the horrors of group violence is a powerful motivator for peace.**

The experiment—and dozens of others like it during the past 20 years—confirmed several important facts about exactly how the human brain is “identity crazed.” The scans show, for one, that a lot of our perceptions and emotions about groups happen outside our awareness or control. I have no conscious preference for white people over black people. On the contrary, like most Americans, I abhor racism. Yet, had I not been told I was a Leopard, I almost certainly would have shown an unconscious preference for white faces over black ones. That I did not illustrates a different important finding in Van Bavel’s research: New team identities can easily supplant old ones in our minds. All Van Bavel had to do was tell me about two teams and inform me that I was on one. That was enough for my brain to prefer Leopards over Tigers as quickly and strongly as it normally distinguishes blacks and whites.

The scans reflected a key fact about human groupishness: We have keen mental radar that seeks to learn what groups matter around us and which ones we are members of. And this radar is always on. Even as we sit comfortably in our racial, religious, national, and other identities, our minds are alert to the possibility of new coalitions.

It’s not hard to see why humans should have evolved to care about their teams and their place on those teams. Relying on each other is a sound survival strategy for a frail, noisy creature without a lot of built-in weapons. Living in groups is a ticket to survival, which is why most primates live in them. In fact, there is no human society without clear lines that distinguish various groups.

“This is how person perception generally works,” Van Bavel told me. “In the first split second, we judge people on the basis of their group memberships.” Caring about your group memberships isn’t something you have to learn, like reading or driving. It’s something you do automatically, like breathing.

In fact, much of our sensitivity to groups begins long before we can speak. Very young babies prefer adults who look like their caretakers over adults who look different; some evidence shows they also prefer the foods their mothers ate while pregnant or breastfeeding over novel ones, and



they like the sound of the language they heard in the womb and early in life much better than an alien tongue. These preferences continue. In adulthood most of us are better at recognizing the faces and reading the emotions of people who look and act like us.

Psychologists have long established how remarkably easy it is to awaken our tribal minds. In a classic experiment conducted in 1954, for example, researchers from the University of Oklahoma made and unmade two warring tribes out of 22 local boys. All were sixth graders, came from similar neighborhoods, and were white. Divided into two groups and bused separately to Robbers Cave State Park, the kids were turned loose with just a few guidelines from the experimenters. Each group soon set itself up with a bunkhouse and a swimming hole, gave itself a name, and established norms (one, the Rattlers, cursed a blue streak, while their rivals, the Eagles, prided

themselves on clean language). Then, a week in, each tribe discovered the other.

Within days they were at war—raiding each other's bunkhouses and eating only with members of their own group. Baseball games and other competitions turned into exchanges of insults. Angry talk about "those n\*\*\*\*\* campers" and "communists" and "sissies" escalated. Then, in the third week of the camp, the experimenters faked some challenges (pulling a disabled truck, unpacking food delivered in crates) that forced the Rattlers and Eagles to work together. The experience of cooperating toward a common goal united them. By the end of the three-week camp, the boys were singing "The Star-Spangled Banner" together and letting bygones be bygones.

As the Robbers Cave experiment illustrated, human beings can shift their group perceptions in both directions. Sometimes we turn Us into Them. But we can also turn Them into Us.



**W**HEN I MET THEM LAST October, Solomon Igbawua and Dahiru Bala were attending a general meeting of Tiv and Hausa-Fulani from both of their communities. It was the first time in three years, the first time since the crisis, that Tiv like Igbawua were willing to visit once familiar Daudu. The meeting began with prayers (one Christian, one Muslim) and continued with speeches in praise of restored peace. Then, through my interpreters, I spoke with men and women from both sides. They told us about losing loved ones, losing homes, hiding in the bush for days, becoming refugees. Yet, they said, they get along now. Igbawua and Bala say they can be friends again.

As we spoke, roosters crowed, goats bleated, and children chased each other in the red-brown

Officers in the Spokane Police Department, including Nick Briggs, develop their skills with the Counter Bias Training Simulator at Washington State University in Spokane. Realistic simulations train officers to use real clues – not stereotypes – when deciding whether or not to use deadly force.

dust. After a while the mosque rang out with a recorded call to prayer. Now and then a tremendous boom would echo from the valley below, startling goats and chickens, which made people laugh and joke. These were tests being conducted at a Nigerian military installation, a mile or so down the road, testing ordnance. It was hard to imagine these polite, relaxed people fearing and hating each other.

It's a striking change. It is as if the herders and farmers had taken a medicine to tamp down fear and hate and bring back trust and sympathy for people outside their own groups. In a sense they did. But the treatment was not a pill.

In 2015 a team from Mercy Corps, a nongovernmental organization that works in the region to promote peace, arrived in Zongo and Daudu, along with local peace groups. They brought an offer. The NGO would supply materials and money to construct borehole wells. This would bring clean water to the two settlements. Residents of both would take part in a program that teaches negotiating skills and conflict prevention. Then they'd have to use those skills, building the boreholes together and jointly operating them.

The program, developed by social scientists and rooted in what science has learned about human groupishness, is one example of how scientists, after studying why we're so "identity crazed," are trying to do something about it by applying their theories and methods to real cases of Us-versus-Them trouble.

"The idea is to diminish the psychological benefits of conflict and increase the psychological benefits of cooperation," says Christopher Grady, a graduate student in political science at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign who is helping to measure the project's results.

Learning to be a good negotiator is "almost a



Viewed from the Mexican side of the U.S.-Mexico border near San Diego, a corrugated metal barrier between the two nations is dwarfed by four of eight prototypes for the wall that U.S. President Donald



**Trump's administration proposes to build. Walls are not just physical barriers – they also reinforce feelings of separation and alienation.**



South Korean soldiers stand guard at the border with North Korea in the village of Panmunjom in July 2017. Despite a common language, culture, and ethnicity (as well as a civilization more than 4,000 years





old), the people of the Korean Peninsula have been divided since 1945 into two fiercely opposed states that are still technically at war. DAVID GUTTENFELDER

meditative practice, of stopping before acting,” says Arthur Martirosyan, a senior consultant at CMPartners, a consulting firm that designed the training program. “It’s about saying, I recognize this situation, and because I recognize it, I know it might trigger very destructive emotions in me. I want to be in control.”

There is no single theory of why people fall prey to an Us-versus-Them mind-set, nor is there a single approach to helping them out of that trap. But the growing number of researchers who work on the problem do share the scientific method. They begin with verifiable facts about human minds, human behavior, and human society. They use those to create an intervention. Then they test the intervention, as a pharmaceutical company would test a drug: People in a conflict are divided randomly into groups that get the “treatment” and those that do not. Then the researchers compare the groups to judge whether the treatment really led to less violence, more justice, and greater peace. Around Zongo and Daudu are villages that didn’t get to try negotiation training and a joint project. But if analysis by Grady and other scholars shows that this approach works as well as it seems to have in Zongo, Daudu, and some other villages in the study, the program will be offered to many more people.

**W**HAT FLIGHT SIMULATORS are to pilots, “use of force” simulators are to cops. The version used at Washington State University in Spokane is typical in many ways. You stand in front of the screen, gun at the ready. Each situation playing out on the screen requires a split-second decision, and the stakes couldn’t be higher. One, for example, is a “domestic violence call.” The camera takes you through a short hallway into a kitchen, where a man and a woman are fighting. The man drags the woman out of view. When you catch up, the man has something in his hand, pointed at her. In another situation you confront an uncooperative driver stopped for a traffic violation. He’s reaching for something inside his car.


If the thing is a cell phone and you shoot him, you might have taken a life for no reason. If it’s a gun and you don’t shoot, you might be dead.

But there’s a difference between the WSU simulator and most others that police use: It varies the demographic profiles of the people encountered, including their ethnic and racial identities, and places them in scenarios designed to measure and counter bias. So even as officers get practice in the basics of handling tense situations, they’re also learning when and how they treat blacks and Hispanics differently from whites. The Counter Bias Training Simulator (CBTsim) was developed by Lois James, an assistant professor in the university’s College of Nursing, to show officers how they may treat black, Hispanic, and white people differently in the exact same situations.

“The goal of CBTsim is in fact to remove race or any other demographic from this decision-making process,” James says, “by teaching officers to focus solely on the objective level of threat.”

Such objectivity is precisely what society needs from people in occupations in which equal treatment is essential—doctors, lawyers, teachers, military officers, and, of course, anyone in law enforcement. But given the power of our innate tendency to sort people into groups that we don’t think or feel the same about, it is a tough demand. The United States is now in a national conversation about how much and how often police don’t treat all civilians equally. On a range of activities, from traffic stops and low-level arrests to incidents in which police shoot civilians, evidence shows that there are significant disparities in how American police treat nonwhites compared with how they treat whites.

“I was bothered by what I saw as a paradox,” says Lorie Fridell, a criminologist at the University of South Florida, noting that lab studies suggest bias in policing is strong. “On the other hand

  
Palestinians clash with Israeli security forces in the West Bank city of Ramallah on December 29, 2017. Weeks of unrest followed the U.S. government’s decision earlier that month to move its embassy to Jerusalem.

I know most police want to serve the public and are very offended at the idea that they might be prejudiced. They aren't racists."

The key to unlocking the paradox, Fridell says, is understanding that the group biases involved are often not conscious. They're implicit—happening without our intent and without our knowledge. Like my preference for Leopards over Tigers, which I learned about only after I'd seen a map of it in my brain scan.

The science of group perception reveals how those biases work, Fridell says. It also shows why cops are right to resent the implication that they are especially biased. The unconscious biases that make a cop favor people like himself are just as strong in Fridell, and me, and you.

Fridell's Fair and Impartial Policing (FIP) program is a training course for cops. Like James's simulator, it is designed to get law enforcement to think about managing their often unnoticed preference for Us and against Them so that it doesn't affect their obligation to treat all people equally. For an officer, Us might be "Us law-abiding people" versus Them, the kind of person who has a rap sheet; or it might be Us cops versus Them, the civilians. But in the United States, with its long history of race-based injustice against African Americans and other minorities, Us is often "Us white people," and Them is everyone else.

Since 2007 Fridell has received over \$1.5 million



**ISRAELI** &

**PALESTINIAN**

Competing claims of landownership leave little room for peaceful coexistence.

### **HISTORY**

Israel and the Palestinian territories include homelands of both Jews and Palestinians. In the 19th century, Zionism—the movement for the creation of a Jewish state—gathered strength, drawing hundreds of thousands of Jewish immigrants to the area. In 1948 Zionism dreams became reality with the establishment of Israel. When war broke out between the new nation and its Arab neighbors, hundreds of thousands of Palestinian Arabs were displaced from their homes.

### **DIFFERENCES**

Religion and ethnicity play a role, but the conflict is really a struggle over territory and sovereignty. Extremists on both sides reject compromise, holding the exclusion of the other as a cherished ideal that must not be traded away for politics.

### **CONFLICT SPARK**

Attacks in response to Israeli control of occupied territories and Jewish settlement are met with military force in a spiral of violence. Years of conflict have left both sides mistrustful of the other.

### **EFFORTS TO DEFUSE**

While some civilian groups work tirelessly to promote mutual understanding, ultimately the conflict can be resolved only by national and international accords.





At Checkpoint 300 near Bethlehem, Palestinians from the West Bank, some climbing the walls to cut the line, wait to be cleared for entry into Israel. Thousands of workers endure the daily ordeal in exchange for



**better paying work in Israel. Disparities in economic opportunity often reinforce divisions based on religion, ethnicity, or rival territorial claims.**



Conflict between groups inflicts pain on people who have no say in the fight. After fleeing Myanmar army troops, hundreds of Rohingya children struggle for food at Balukhali refugee camp in southern Bangladesh.



In 2017 at least 700,000 Rohingya were forced to flee a campaign of murder, rape, and devastation by Myanmar's army.



# ROHINGYA

&

# BURMESE

Denied the basic rights of citizenship, an oppressed minority is forced to flee.

## **HISTORY**

Long-standing discrimination against the Rohingya, a Muslim minority group, by the majority Buddhist population increased in 1982, when the military government made it much harder for Rohingya to obtain citizenship. In 2012, after widespread violence in Rakhine state, where most Rohingya live, the government moved many of them into displacement camps.

## **DIFFERENCES**

Religion and race. The Burmese are mostly Buddhists, and the Rohingya are mostly Muslim. Among the Burmese there is widespread resentment against South Asians, including the Rohingya, many of whose ancestors were brought to Burma from Bangladesh as laborers during British colonial rule.

## **CONFLICT SPARK**

Recent attacks by a small Rohingya militant group have been used to justify a systematic campaign of rape, murder, and arson that has forced hundreds of thousands of Rohingya to seek refuge in neighboring countries.

## **EFFORTS TO DEFUSE**

The government has endorsed a set of recommendations from a UN advisory commission addressing the underlying causes of the crisis. But they have yet to be implemented, and the oppression continues.

in grants from the U.S. Justice Department and delivered training to thousands of officers in hundreds of police departments across the U.S. and Canada.

“It is probably the norm that they don’t want to be in the room,” Fridell says of the cops. Police usually start in a range from “defensive to hostile,” she says. This is because police expect to be cast as the “bad guys” in a drama in which everyone else is a good guy. “The debate about police bias has characterized it as being about *explicit* bias,” Fridell says, as if the main problem is cops who are deliberately racist. Approaching the issue as a scientific take on the way all minds work, she says, lets a more honest conversation take place. “We’re not pointing fingers,” she says. “We’re not talking about police bias. We’re talking about human bias.”

When I visited the Indianapolis Metropolitan Police Department in 2017, some top brass were sitting down to take Fridell’s workshop with community leaders. Like other cities, Indianapolis has a problem of trust between police and minority communities. In many neighborhoods whose residents are mostly African Americans, the police feel more like occupiers than public servants. African Americans, though 28 percent of the city’s population, are only 15 percent of its police force.

Indianapolis’s police chief, Bryan K. Roach, appointed in January 2017, wants to improve





relations. He was attracted to FIP, he says, because it is based on scientific research, not opinion. “What caught our eye is there is science behind it, which makes it a little more palatable to people who do not believe that this is a problem.”

Roach decided to have all 1,600 officers in the department undergo implicit-bias training. He began with himself, his top officers, and representatives of communities throughout the city.

“I thought it went very well,” says Patricia Payne, a retired teacher and school administrator who runs anti-racism workshops for the Indianapolis school system. The fact that the training was about the science of groupishness, she says, helped foster a respectful conversation among the activists and the police commanders. “I realized it was the first time I had ever really been in a room listening to the police perspective,” she says.

It’s certainly a good idea to improve communications between police departments and the people they serve. But the bottom line for implicit-bias training is the same one society wants from any other novel “treatment”: Does it work? Getting an answer is a fiendishly hard problem. How do you prove that an attitude expressed in June affected your behavior in October? Scientists are just beginning to get a handle on that.

For example, James and her colleagues recently began a two-year project that will track some police departments in Ohio as they deal with the people they speak with, stop, arrest, or otherwise encounter. In 2018 the study will simply record how cops behave, using randomly selected moments of body-camera footage, citizen complaints, and other sources of data. Next year each force will be divided at random into four groups. One group will just carry on as they always have, without any training (they’re the control group, the behavioral equivalent of patients who get a

placebo during a drug trial). Another group will receive only training in the Counter Bias Training Simulator. The third group will go through classroom-based training. And the last one will take both simulator and classroom training.

In the nine months that follow, the researchers will gather the same kind of data as before. The result of this randomized controlled trial, in 2020, will be a mountain of data about how police with different kinds of training compare with cops who didn’t do any work on implicit bias. And that data should establish whether and how such training results in fairer policing.

This kind of careful testing is taking place in other contexts more and more around the world. In a few years it may show that we’ve finally discovered a true science of human groupishness—one that can help us master these instincts, before they master us. This could make it easier to establish a more peaceful and just world.

But no one imagines it will be easy. Since my visit to Benue last October, violent conflict in the region between farmers and herders has only gotten worse, fueled in part by Benue’s new anti-grazing law, which herders believe aims to drive them out of the state. (It requires that cattle be confined to ranches—ranches that largely don’t exist and that the law makes no provision for creating.)

At the time of writing, however, the negotiated peace between the farmers of Zongo and the herders in Daudu was still intact. In fact, herders threatened in other areas have come to the Zongo-Daudu area for refuge. When that influx alarmed nearby farmers, the residents of the two communities trained in negotiation were able to defuse the tension and foster mutual respect.

Like many people on both sides of the conflict, Solomon Igbawua has linked the new ideas of negotiation training to his deep religious faith. Forgiveness for past misdeeds, he says, is both a good idea for negotiators and an obligation for Christians. He has forgiven the herders, he says, for the most part. But sometimes he sees an older man and he’s reminded that his father was killed in the fighting three years ago.

“I can forgive,” he says. “But I cannot forget.” □

  
**Buddhist monks demonstrate against Rohingya Muslims in Yangon, Myanmar, in May 2015. In extreme Us-versus-Them conflicts, antagonists dehumanize their foe. Ultranationalist monk Ashin Wirathu has compared Muslims to mad dogs and invasive carp.**



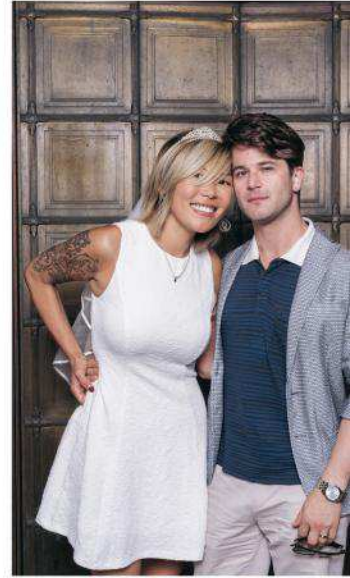
In Ramiro, Rwanda, Cyrille Namubonye, a genocide perpetrator, walks with survivor Maria Nyirambarushimana during a Karuna Center for Peacebuilding workshop aimed at building trust and forgiveness. "In their



process of healing, Cyrille realized he needs Maria, and Maria realized she needs Cyrille,” says Rosette Sebasoni, Karuna’s project manager there.



Hallil Binici kisses the hand of his bride, Jade Calliste-Edgar, after their wedding on October 6, 2017. The newlyweds "went right back to work" that day, Jade says, but planned to combine honeymoon trips with visits to her family in Florida and his in Turkey.



Amanda Moore-Honigsberg and Gregory Honigsberg first met in 2015 at work, where she was a chef and he was a...



Ed and Christina Victori became a couple in 2014. His heritage is Korean, Irish, and Mongolian; hers is Italian, British, and German.



Chantal Thomson says she and Orlando Easterling, Jr., "are proud to help pave the way for other people to follow their hearts."



Robert and Marta Muniz have been "inseparable" since 2010, he says. His family roots are in Puerto Rico, hers in Poland.

## Halil proposed to Jade by writing **WILL YOU MARRY ME** in the sand on a beach. Both wanted a small, frugal wedding. Jade wore a Rent the Runway dress for their vows, witnessed by a few friends, at the city clerk's office in Manhattan.

Jade Calliste-Edgar is an African-American woman raised in Florida. Halil Bini-ci is a Turkish man raised in Istanbul. The two 23-year-olds live in New York City, where Halil works as a cameraman and Jade is in graduate school, studying to be a mental health counselor. During two days in fall 2017, they were one of numerous pairs of mixed race or ethnicity who tied the knot at the Manhattan marriage bureau, then happily posed for *National Geographic* photographer Wayne Lawrence.

Jade and Halil also are part of a cultural shift. In 2015, 17 percent of U.S. newlyweds had a spouse of a different race or ethnicity, according to a Pew Research Center analysis of Census Bureau data. That's roughly a fivefold increase since 1967, when the U.S. Supreme Court's ruling in *Loving v. Virginia* made interracial marriage legal. Simply put, Pew reported, "Americans have become more accepting of marriages involving spouses of different races and ethnicities."

The *Loving* decision invalidated state laws banning interracial marriage, which 17 of the 50 states still had at that time. Changing the law was a start—but it didn't "necessarily do anything to change people's minds," says Syracuse University law professor Kevin Noble Maillard, who writes frequently about intermarriage.

Maillard suggests that the growing acceptance of interracial marriage in the past 50 years—and of same-sex marriage in the past dozen years—has been influenced by shifting social norms and by public and media validation. Partners of different races or ethnicities are nothing new, he notes: "But it's very different when there's public recognition of these relationships and when they become representations of regular families—when they're the people in the Cheerios commercial."

Jade says that she and Halil haven't experienced overt hostility when they're out together, though sometimes there are dirty looks or muttered insults. Both of them feel that by being a couple they're promoting important principles: "That we're all human beings and there's nothing inherently different between us."

That's the point of the meme that the two posted on Facebook shortly before they married. It's two photos side by side. The first shows two eggs, one brown shelled and one white shelled. The second shows the eggs cracked into a skillet, looking very much alike. The caption: "Let that sink in for a minute, America!" □

# The Many Colors of Matrimony

The growing acceptance of marrying across racial and ethnic lines can be seen in U.S. census statistics—and over two days at a New York City clerk's office.

By Patricia Edmonds  
Photographs by Wayne Lawrence



New York City residents Stephanie Mansfield and Shiva Nah...  
including time spent living in Europe and Asia. At home they celebrate bo...



...ppan have been together seven years,  
...both Christmas and Diwali, the Hindu festival of lights.



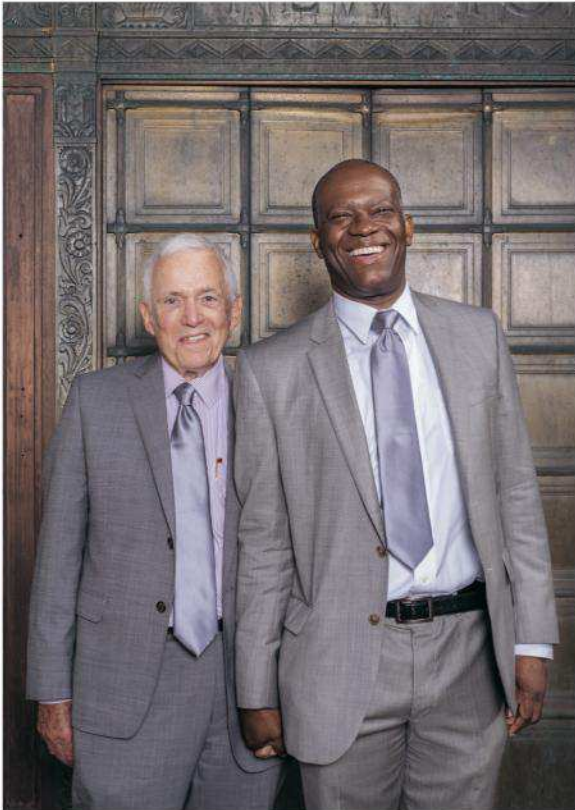
Nathan Reese is from California; his bride, Connie Wang, is from "Minnesota via Jinan, China," he says. Though they had a larger wedding later with family and friends, Nathan reports that getting married first at city hall was "surprisingly delightful...like an extremely joyful DMV experience."



Alan and Ayme Sherlock clicked on their first date and married about a year later. They live in Lodi, New Jersey.



Walter Chang and Nadia Shutava had a private wedding in South Korea before their civil ceremony in New York City.



Robin Kennedy (left) and Carl Sylvestre were a couple for nearly 23 years before they wed. They honeymooned in Montréal.



Joseph Alexandre, from Haiti, and Shannon Allen, from Ohio, met in 2015. Despite different upbringings, she says, "our connection is so strong."



# 50 YEARS AFTER LOVING v. VIRGINIA

Intermarriage rates have climbed steadily in the half century since the U.S. Supreme Court's *Loving v. Virginia* ruling struck down state laws that banned interracial marriage. From then until 2015, the share of newlywed intermarried couples went from one in 33 to one in six. Today such couples account for one in 10 marriages overall. Intermarriage is equally common among men and women, more common among Asians and Hispanics than other racial and ethnic groups, and more common among black men than black women and Asian women than Asian men.

## MIXED MARRIAGE

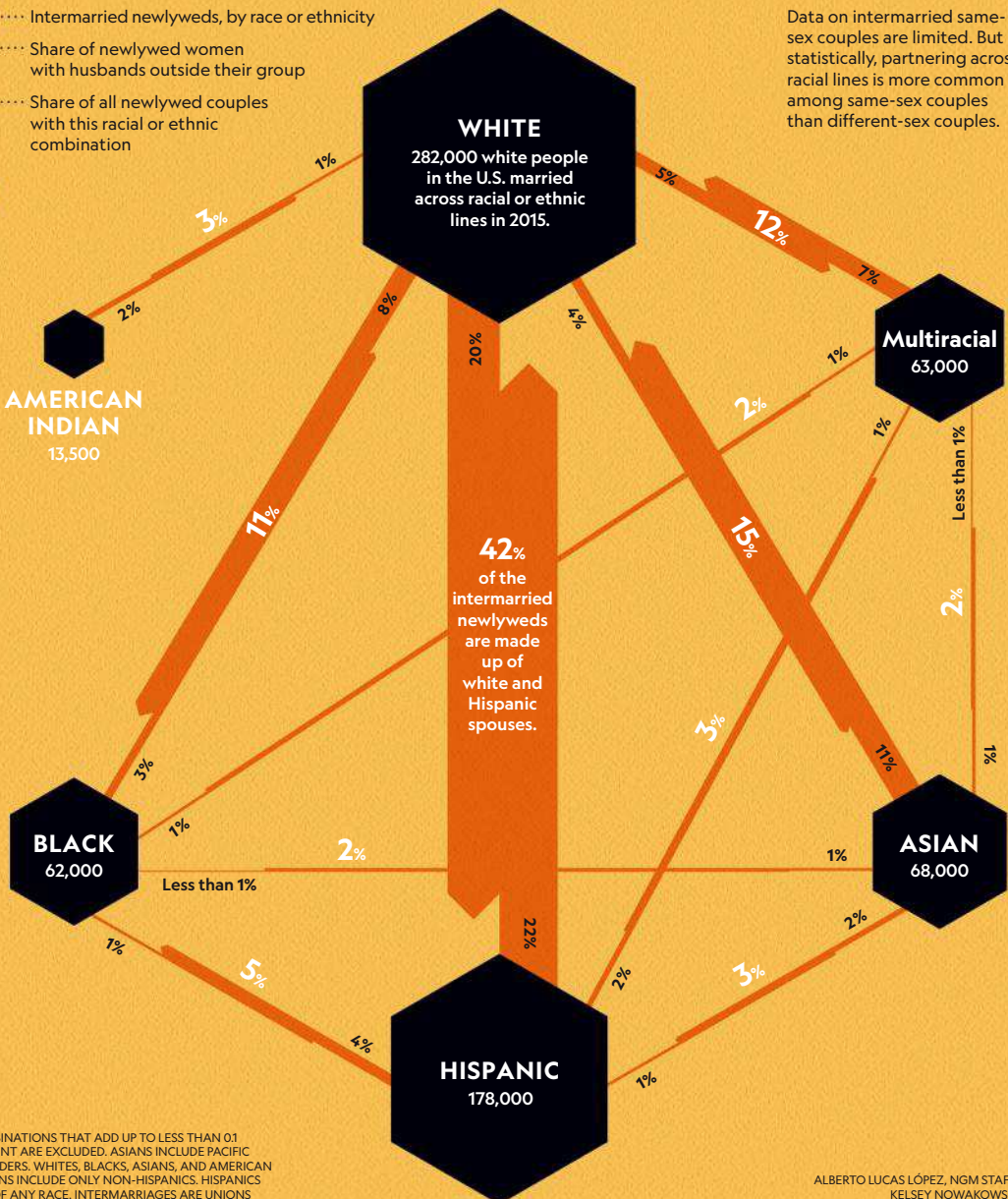
U.S. newlyweds with partners of another group



## U.S. intermarried newlyweds

- Intermarried newlyweds, by race or ethnicity
- Share of newlywed women with husbands outside their group
- Share of all newlywed couples with this racial or ethnic combination


Data on intermarried same-sex couples are limited. But statistically, partnering across racial lines is more common among same-sex couples than different-sex couples.



COMBINATIONS THAT ADD UP TO LESS THAN 01 PERCENT ARE EXCLUDED. ASIANS INCLUDE PACIFIC ISLANDERS. WHITES, BLACKS, ASIANS, AND AMERICAN INDIANS INCLUDE ONLY NON-HISPANICS. HISPANICS ARE OF ANY RACE. INTERMARRIAGES ARE UNIONS ACROSS RACE AND/OR ETHNICITY.

ALBERTO LUCAS LÓPEZ, NGM STAFF;  
KELSEY NOWAKOWSKI  
DATA SOURCE: PEW RESEARCH CENTER





Felyssa Ricco stands outside the house in Hazleton, Pennsylvania, where she lives with her mother and stepfather, Kelly and Jesse Portanova. In addition to flying Old Glory and other flags, such as “Don’t Tread on Me,” the Portanovas sometimes fly the Confederate flag, saying it’s a way of standing up to those who believe it shouldn’t be displayed or who want to disregard America’s history.

# The Rising Anxiety of White America

Demographic changes rippling across the country are fueling fears among some, who see their culture and standing threatened.

BY MICHELE NORRIS  
PHOTOGRAPHS BY GILLIAN LAUB

**E**ven after the coal mines closed and the factory jobs disappeared and the businesses began taking down their signs on Broad Street, even after the population started its steady decline and the hospital was on the brink of bankruptcy, the residents of Hazleton, Pennsylvania, flocked downtown for the annual Funfest.

For years Sally Yale participated in the fall parade in a souped-up teacup salvaged from a spinning ride at the shuttered amusement park. Tricked out with smoking dry ice, it was the perfect advertisement for her gourmet coffee shop.

Yale is 53, but her angular face lights up like a child's when she talks about Funfest. The applause from the crowd. The Hazletonians who returned for the celebration. "And the food," Yale says, lifting her brows and rolling her eyes to mimic pure bliss. The cannoli and pierogi, the sausages and funnel cakes—treats that represented the waves of European immigrants that had settled in Hazleton's rolling hills.

Then it all changed. Funfest, in Sally Yale's eyes, became too scary. Too uncomfortable. To be honest...too brown. "You just know if you go to a public event, you know you are going to be outnumbered," Yale says. "You know you're going to be the minority, and do you want to go?"

For Yale, the answer was no.

Outnumbered is a word that came up often

## Missing the Past

Bob Sacco tends bar a few days a week on Hazleton's Alter Street, where many storefronts are now Latino-owned businesses. The tavern draws both white patrons and Latino ones. The old crowd laments that the area's newer employers, such as distribution centers, don't provide the kind of pay or benefits that workers once found at the mines and factories that closed decades ago. Sacco says that he misses "the good old days."



when I talked with white residents of this eastern Pennsylvania town. Outnumbered in the waiting room at the doctor's office. Outnumbered at the bank. Outnumbered at the Kmart, where the cashier merrily chitchats in Spanish with Hazleton's newer residents.

Hazleton was another former coal mining town slipping into decline until a wave of Latinos arrived. It would not be an overstatement to say a tidal wave. In 2000 Hazleton's 23,399 residents were 95 percent non-Hispanic white and less than 5 percent Latino. By 2016 Latinos became the majority, composing 52 percent of the population, while the white share plunged to 44 percent.

"We joke about it and say we are in the minority now," says Bob Sacco, a bartender at A&L Lounge, a tavern on a street now mainly filled with Latino-owned storefronts. "They took over



the city. We joke about it all the time, but it's more than a joke."

That dizzying shift is an extreme manifestation of the nation's changing demographics. The U.S. Census Bureau has projected that non-Hispanic whites will make up less than 50 percent of the population by 2044, a change that almost certainly will recast American race relations and the role and status of white Americans, who have long been a comfortable majority.

Hazleton's experience offers a glimpse into the future as white Americans confront the end of their majority status, which often has meant that their story, their traditions, their tastes, and their cultural aesthetic were seen as being quintessentially American. This is a conversation already exploding across the country as some white Americans, in online forums and protests over

the removal of Confederate monuments, react anxiously and angrily to a sense that their way of life is under threat. Those are the stories that grab headlines and trigger social media show-downs. But the shift in status—or what some are calling "the altitude adjustment"—is also playing out in much more subtle ways in classrooms, break rooms, factory floors, and shopping malls, where the future has arrived ahead of schedule. Since 2000, the minority population has grown to outnumber the population of whites who aren't Hispanic in such counties as Suffolk in Massachusetts, Montgomery in Maryland, Mecklenburg in North Carolina, as well as counties in California, Colorado, Florida, Georgia, New Jersey, and Texas.

For decades, examining race in America meant focusing on the advancement and struggles of people of color. Under this framework, being

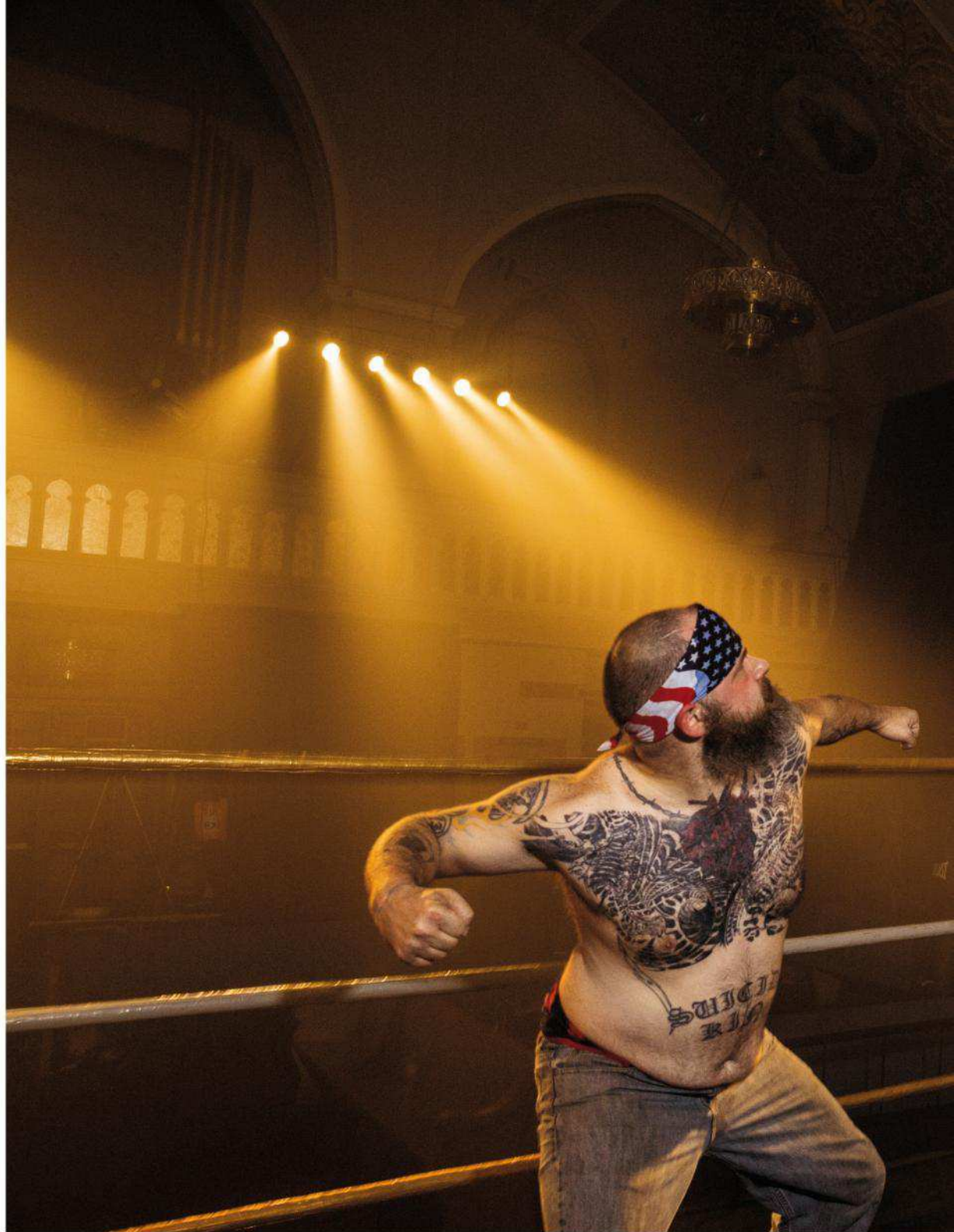


# Common Ground

NEW FRIENDSHIPS ARISE



After decades of steady economic decline, downtown Hazleton has a different look, feel, and sound, thanks to a new crop of Latino-owned businesses that have opened since 2001, including several busy barber shops. Justin Horvath, 26 (at left), and José Pérez, 37, ducked into Donato's Finest on their day off for a trim from barber Albert Cuello. Horvath was born in Hazleton and says he voted for Donald Trump. Pérez was born in Puerto Rico and chose not to vote. The two men are neighbors, close friends, and co-workers at the nearby American Eagle Outfitters distribution center.



# Symbols of the City

DIVERSITY IN THE RING





The Sanctuary in Hazleton is an all-purpose community center that hosts free public events in a former church that was once home to a hundred-year-old Slovak parish. Two stars at the popular stunt-fighting smackdowns have created an act that makes sport of tensions between the old and the new Hazleton. With 16 years in the ring, Jason Dougherty wears a U.S. flag bandanna, while the reigning local champion, Marcelino Cabrera, sports trunks displaying the flag of the Dominican Republic. Dougherty helped train Cabrera, who moved to Hazleton when he was 15.



# Gridiron Lineup

A TEAM TRANSFORMED



The Hazleton Area High School football team reflects the town's dramatic demographic changes. Principal Rocco Petrone, who used to be the coach, said the team was mostly white 15 years ago. Now almost half of the players are minorities. The high school is 58 percent Latino and 38 percent white. Students engage easily across the color line, Petrone says. "They accept each other as friends, as colleagues, as classmates." The Hazleton Cougars had a winning season last fall.

white was simply the default. Every other race or ethnic group was “other-ized,” and matters of race were the problem and province of people of color. In a period bookended by the presidential elections of Barack Obama and Donald Trump, the question of what it means to be white in America has increasingly taken center stage.

On several fronts, there is growing evidence that race is no longer a spectator sport for white Americans: The growth of whiteness studies courses on college campuses. Battles over immigration and affirmative action. A rising death rate for middle-aged white Americans with no more than a high-school diploma from drugs, alcohol, and suicide in what economists are calling “deaths of despair.” The increasingly racially polarized electorate. The popularity of a television show called *Dear White People* that satirizes “post-racial” America. The debate over the history and symbols of the Confederacy. The aggression and appeal of white nationalism, with its newest menacing chant: “You will not replace us.”

The protests in Charlottesville, Virginia, last August likely will be remembered as a moment when hate groups, wearing polo shirts and khakis, stepped out of the shadows. Most Americans soundly denounce the message and the methods of the neo-Nazis, Ku Klux Klan members, and white nationalists who gathered at the “Unite the Right” rally to decry the removal of a monument honoring a Confederate general. But matters of race are complicated, and academics and researchers who closely chart the fractious history of race relations in this country note that the Charlottesville demonstrations—though widely pilloried—also punctuate an issue that animates everything from politics to job prospects and even the world of professional sports: the fear of displacement in an era of rapid change.

JUST OVER 10 YEARS AGO, Hazleton was thrust into the national spotlight when the mayor, now U.S. congressman Lou Barletta, urged the city council to pass a first-of-its-kind ordinance called the Illegal Immigration Relief Act. It set steep penalties for those who hire or rent to undocumented immigrants. It was accompanied by an

ordinance that sought to make English the official language of Hazleton. The laws were introduced amid rising cultural tension in the community, which was seeing an influx of Latinos, many moving from New York and New Jersey. Barletta said the IIRA ordinance—which included the assertion that “illegal immigration leads to higher crime rates”—was aimed at preserving a way of life in “Small Town, USA.” It never went into effect. Federal courts ruled the ordinance was preempted by U.S. immigration law. But the episode still reverberates, says Jamie Longazel, a professor at John Jay College of Criminal Justice in New York City who grew up in Hazleton and has done extensive research on the demographic changes in his hometown. Longazel said the widely publicized debate over the law amplified tensions and fed what social scientists call the “Latino threat narrative.”

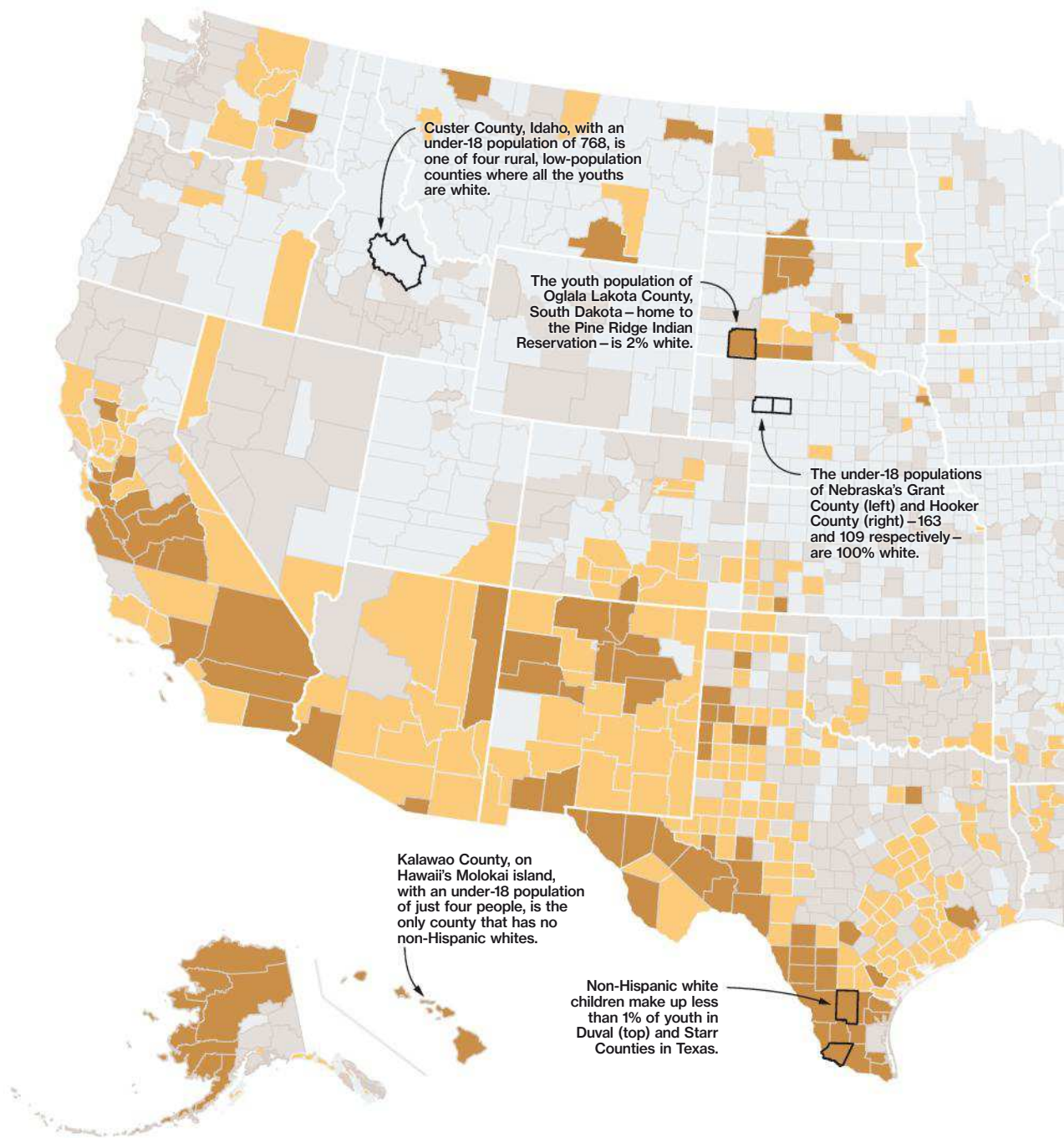
“We know in sociology when community identity is challenged or questioned in some way, the community asserts and defends that identity,” Longazel says. “With Hazleton’s changing demographics and persistent economic decline, the community began to see itself as white. The city reasserted its identity as white.” Longazel thinks that same psychology might be emerging on a national level.

His research found repeated themes. White Hazletonians consistently recalled a city that was “close-knit, quiet, obedient, honest, harmless, and hardworking” and described newcomers as “loud, disobedient, manipulative, lawless, and lazy.” The anecdotes were often similar. Did that many people really witness a Latino family at the grocery store using food stamps to buy seafood

## Hazleton’s Future

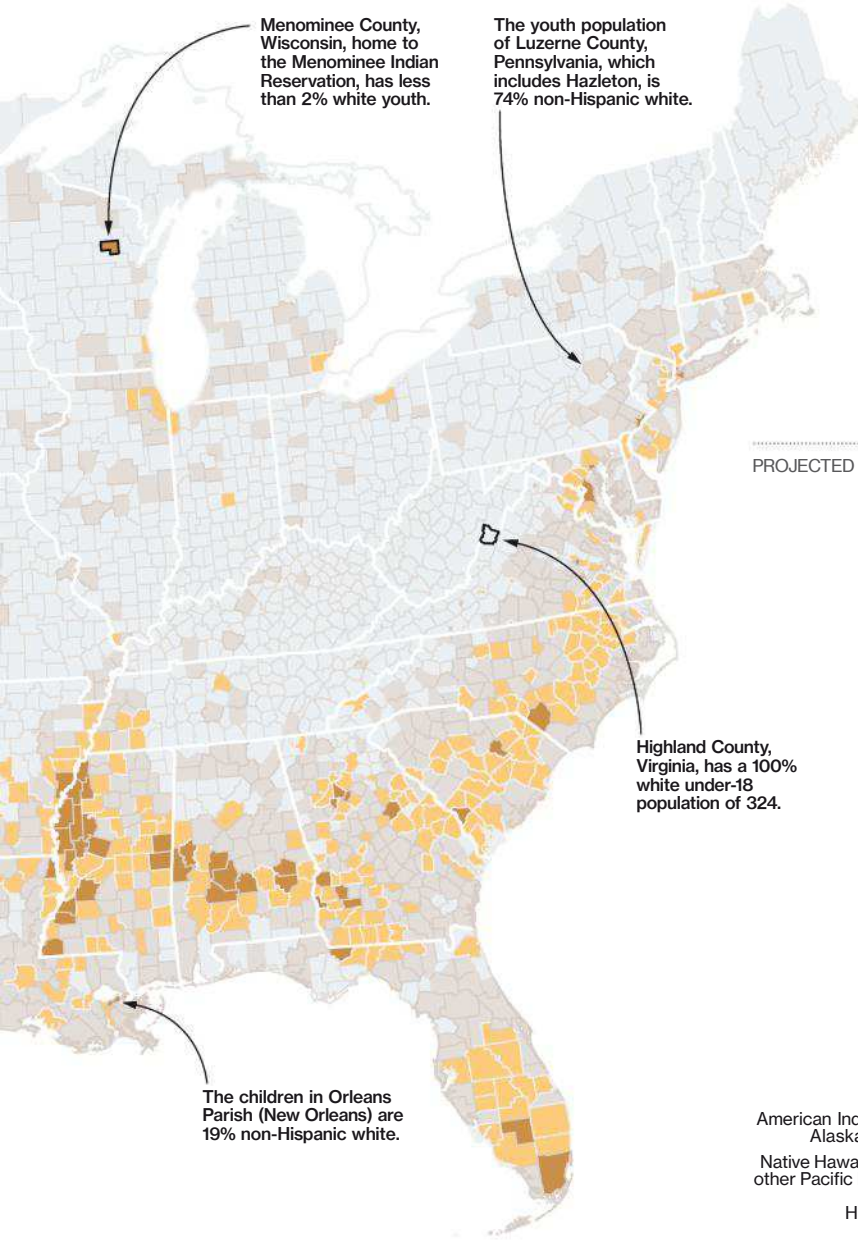
Rafael Santos and Savannah Butala, who are seniors at Hazleton High but on different campuses, hadn’t met until they were crowned homecoming king and queen. Butala’s family has lived in West Hazleton for generations. Santos came from the Dominican Republic when he was 11. Santos ran for homecoming court, he says, “to show that I can achieve whatever I want no matter the color of your skin.”





# The Changing Complexion of Youth

In less than two years, white children who are not Hispanic will no longer be the majority among those under 18 years old in the United States, the Census Bureau estimates. By then, children who are now considered minorities—Latino, black, Asian, and others—will outnumber them, although non-Hispanic white children will remain the largest racial or ethnic group. Within a few decades, the entire non-Hispanic white population in the country will also no longer be the majority.



Menominee County, Wisconsin, home to the Menominee Indian Reservation, has less than 2% white youth.

The youth population of Luzerne County, Pennsylvania, which includes Hazleton, is 74% non-Hispanic white.

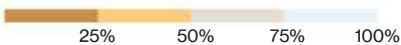
Highland County, Virginia, has a 100% white under-18 population of 324.

The children in Orleans Parish (New Orleans) are 19% non-Hispanic white.

## The color of change

Non-Hispanic whites already are less than 50 percent of the youth population in 632 of America's 3,142 counties.<sup>‡</sup> Most of these areas are in southern and coastal states.

White share of county population under 18 years old, non-Hispanic (2015)



□ Outlined counties have the most and least white youth population share

\*HISPANICS MAY BE OF ANY RACE.

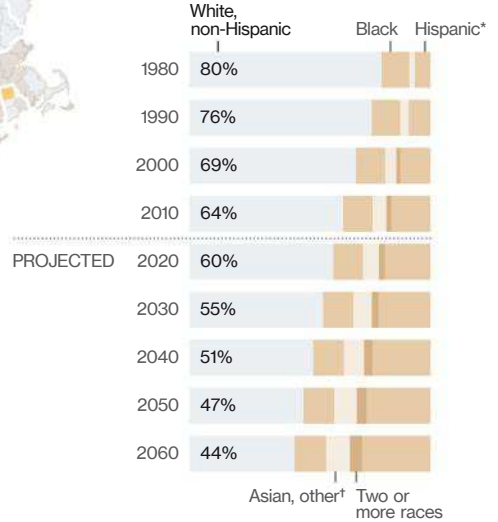
‡INCLUDES AMERICAN INDIAN, ALASKA NATIVE, NATIVE HAWAIIAN, AND OTHER PACIFIC ISLANDER

†INCLUDES EQUIVALENT JURISDICTIONS; ALASKA AND HAWAII NOT TO SCALE.

## Tipping Points

By 2020, 50.2% of American children will be from today's minority groups. By 2044, 50.3% of Americans of all ages will be from those same groups.

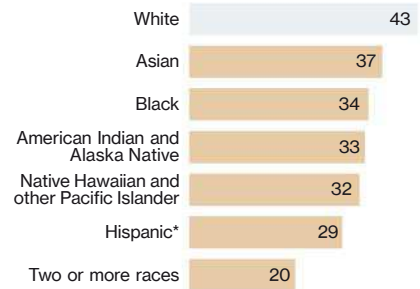
U.S. population composition



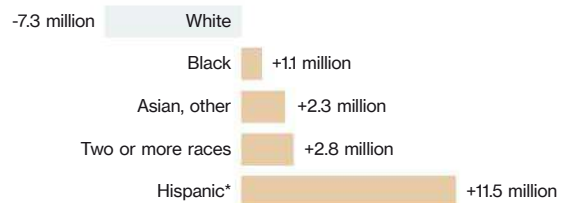
## Aging out

The white, non-Hispanic population's median age is the highest of all groups, while the minority youth population has been increasing by the millions.

Median age, 2016



Change in under-18 population, 1980-2010



RYAN MORRIS, NGM STAFF

SOURCES: INTEGRATED PUBLIC USE MICRODATA SERIES, NATIONAL HISTORICAL GEOGRAPHIC INFORMATION SYSTEM, UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA; U.S. CENSUS BUREAU

and steak, or did the stories spiral forward on their own weight, embraced and repeated as personal observation? And why did so few people in his research reference the new residents who were paying taxes, going to church twice a week, buying sedans on Airport Road, and opening businesses that percolate all up and down North Wyoming Street?

In the end, trying to underscore Hazleton's status as an all-American white enclave was akin to shaking a fist at a rain cloud. Latinos are now the driving force in Hazleton's economy, and the city has taken on an increasingly Latin flavor. Hazleton now looks, sounds, smells, and feels transformed.

Over and over you hear longtime residents say they feel like strangers on their home turf. Yale, the coffee shop owner, has watched most of her classmates from Bishop Hafey High School leave Hazleton, mainly for better job prospects. She opted to stay and opened her gourmet coffee shop, called the Abbey, with its gleaming red espresso machine and its home-style meals. Though her café is just up a hill from downtown, she rarely ventures toward the main business district.

Yale pulled out of Funfest years ago. "Too scary," she says. "If you do go down there, you don't know who is carrying a gun."

The irony is evident to Yale. Her grandfather came to Hazleton from Italy in the early 1900s and became an insurance agent and Americanized his name from Yuele to Yale. She knows the same stereotypes were hurled at Italian and Irish immigrants when they first arrived in Hazleton.

Yale is quick with a laugh and punctuates her hellos and goodbyes with bear hugs. Everything about her says cozy. She wears thick-soled tennis shoes and oversize sweatshirts. But sit with her for a spell, and it's clear that she also has a lot of steel. It's served her well as a single woman running a business. Once the restaurant clears out, she believes in speaking her mind.

"We have one of us in that White House," Yale says of Trump. "We are going to make America great again."

When asked who she means by "we," Yale pauses. Her gaze hardens a bit. The music goes out of her voice. "The 'we' are the Caucasians that

## History Debated

Frank Stewart, along with his wife, Paulette, is waging a fierce battle against New Orleans mayor Mitch Landrieu's decision to remove Confederate monuments. Stewart took out newspaper ads in New Orleans accusing Landrieu of destroying works of art and dividing the city racially. "I do not condone what those represented on these statues did," the businessman wrote, "but I also cannot condone your attempts to eradicate history."



built this country," she says. "Our generation. We're going to... We're going to make our grandfathers proud. We have to."

FOR EIGHT YEARS I have been listening to Americans share their candid views about race and identity. While on sabbatical from National Public Radio, I started the Race Card Project, an initiative to foster honest conversation by asking people to distill their thoughts on race to just six words. That's usually just the beginning of a deeper engagement. Tens of thousands of people have participated, often sending pictures, artifacts, and essays to share the backstory behind their six words.

I created the Race Card Project when the word "post-racial" was in vogue, but I knew America was anything but. U.S. voters had just sent a black





family to the White House for the first time, and we thought the conversation was over? I suspected instead that it was time to put on our proverbial seat belts and buckle up for a bumpy ride. Most Americans had never had a black boss, and now they had a black president.

When six-word stories first started arriving in large numbers—first as postcards and eventually via digital submissions at *theracecardproject.com*—I assumed the bulk of the stories would come from those in the minority. I was wrong.

People from all kinds of races, faiths, regions, classes, and backgrounds have submitted stories, but since the beginning, most have come from white people. “White, not allowed to be proud.” “I’m only white when it’s convenient.” “More than just a ‘white girl.’” “Yes, it’s ok to be white.” “She’s nothing but poor white trash.” “Gay, but

at least I’m white.” “Hated for being a white cop.” “Abuse was invisible because I’m white.” “Not as white as I appear.” “I’m white and not ashamed.” “White privilege? More like white guilt.” “We the people = We white people.” “Other races resent us White people.” “Most white people are not racists.” “White people do not own racism.” “I unpack my white privilege daily.”

White Americans are not traditionally in the foreground of this country’s conversation about race, but the Race Card Project’s archive has become a place where thousands of people have talked honestly about privilege, guilt, rage, myopia, displacement, allegiance, power, romance, or simply the world as seen through a white gaze.

“The whole notion of whiteness as we know it depends on not being a minority,” says Brian Glover, a professor who specializes in 18th-century



## **A Swift Downfall**

STANDING BY HIS BELIEFS



Nick Dean was fired as principal of a charter school, where most of the students are black, after a video emerged showing him at a rally to protest the removal of Confederate monuments in New Orleans. Dean was wearing a ring with an iron cross and carrying a wooden shield decorated with words and symbols sometimes used by white nationalists. Dean says he attended only to defend the free-speech rights of protesters. He believes the monuments are part of history and should remain. Dean sits with two of his former students, Dytrell Mcewen and Jermaine Daniel Moses.

British literature at East Carolina University in Greenville, North Carolina. “In the 20th century, the white man was the best deal that anybody ever had in the history of the planet. I mean, in America you could feel like you were at the center of everything. You didn’t have to justify yourself.”

After hearing a story about the demographic changes, Glover sent these six words to the Race Card Project in-box: “These days, I understand the WASPs.” Glover explains that he was born in the 1970s to a family of mixed European origin—Jewish, Irish, Greek, German, Slovene, people once not seen as fully white by the gatekeepers of social class. But over time they moved into the mainstream. “I definitely felt that I was a white American, which I understood to mean just plain American,” he says.

These new Americans, fueled by waves of European immigrants like Glover’s great-grandparents, were starting to displace the white Anglo-Saxon Protestants who had run the country for two centuries. In a short, candid essay he submitted to the Race Card Project, Glover wrote, “We had taken over their colleges, their clubs, and even the White House,” referring to the election of an Irish Catholic president, John F. Kennedy, in 1960.

“Well, now we’re in their shoes,” he wrote. “People of Color are moving into the mainstream now; ‘White’ is no longer the default setting for ‘American.’ And though it’s clear that this process is inevitable—it’s just a matter of numbers and demographics—a lot of the time, to be honest, I’m sad about it. The country is changing in ways that aren’t very good for me, and I’ve got no choice but to adapt. I’m not complaining; it’s only fair that other people get the same opportunity we got. But now I find myself looking back at the WASPs with new respect. Though there were many notable exceptions, for the most part during their fall from power they conducted themselves with quiet dignity. I’m sure it didn’t feel good for them at the time, but for the most part they just got on with their lives. We could learn from their example.”

Glover has been thinking a lot these days about what equality means for white Americans

## Righting Wrongs

A statue of a black woman rises where one of Confederate president Jefferson Davis was removed last year in New Orleans. Film director Zac Manuel (center) used the artwork in a music video for “If All I Was Was Black,” by soul singer Mavis Staples. He says the statue stands for black women who’ve been marginalized and had their stories erased from U.S. history. “This is also our culture and our history,” he says, “and we belong.”



who enjoyed advantages they’ve never fully acknowledged having. He’s an academic who’s used to critiquing an issue from all sides, but this makes him weary. The stakes directly affect him.

“It means that a lot of people are just going to lose materially and are already losing materially,” he told me in a recent conversation. “I can somehow feel more virtuous because it was necessarily built on equality? I just don’t know if that really keeps people warm at night, knowing that there’s equality out there. I think they would rather have privilege.” He’s just being honest about the practical effect for people like him.

Although the Declaration of Independence asserts that “all men are created equal,” Glover notes that “America was founded on slavery.” He continues, “So I’m not sure that you can take the abstract principle of equality without the



accompanying inequality of reality.” He knows what he’s saying is impolitic and perhaps incendiary. Through my work at the Race Card Project, I know he’s not alone in his angst. For his part Glover maintains that it’s hard for an individual—or a country—to evolve past discomfort if the source of the anxiety is only discussed in hushed tones.

SO WHAT HAPPENS when America crosses that milestone and becomes a majority-minority country? There won’t be any fireworks or bells, and in truth this country’s infrastructure around wealth, politics, education, and opportunity is so entrenched that white people, and white men in particular, will still hold the reins of power on Wall Street and Main Street for quite some time. The change is likely to be more subtle. You will see it at the grocery store, in the produce section

and condiment aisle. You will see it in classrooms, where the under-18 population will reach a majority-minority state in just two years. You will notice it in pop culture and in advertisements, where businesses have already figured out that the color most important to their bottom line is green.

While the angst over the coming demographic shift might make for more uncomfortable race relations, it might finally usher in a reckoning in which America faces hard truths: The Founding Fathers built white dominance into the fabric and laws of the nation, and a country that proclaims to love freedom and liberty is still struggling with its roots in the original sin of slavery.

Pride and history stir up a complicated cocktail in New Orleans, where Mayor Mitch Landrieu championed the removal of Confederate monuments throughout the city, including one of

Gen. Robert E. Lee, despite vociferous protests and cries of cultural displacement.

“These statues are not just stone and metal,” Landrieu said in a speech that drew widespread attention due to its eloquent call for fellow Southerners to reject a history that many hold dear. “They are not just innocent remembrances of a benign history. These monuments purposefully celebrate a fictional, sanitized Confederacy—ignoring the death, ignoring the enslavement and the terror it actually stood for.”

For some Landrieu emerged as a hero—a white Southerner willing to ask America to atone for its original sin. To others he’s become a pariah and the subject of taunts and death threats. New Orleans businessman Frank Stewart, who took out newspaper ads denouncing the removal of the monuments, said they should have been amended instead of removed. “A monument and a memorial to a wonderful leader, a general, is not a symbol of slavery and discrimination or segregation,” Stewart says. “Those monuments represent the life of people who were very significant in history, and you don’t destroy monuments. You don’t burn history books. You learn from them.”

Stewart accuses Landrieu of rewriting and erasing history and using the issue to make a national name for himself. For a country that has, in his view, moved past enslavement and Jim Crow segregation—something he calls “positive evolution”—the monuments stand as important milestones that remind New Orleans of how far the city and the country have moved forward.

For his part, Landrieu says, “we have a better argument.” He presides over a city that is 59 percent black, and says, “It was absolutely clear to me the majority of the people in this city wanted to take those monuments down, but they didn’t know

how to do it, and they didn’t have the political power. But I did.”

Landrieu lost 37 percent of his white support when he removed the monuments, and polls indicate that nearly nine out of 10 white Louisianans opposed their removal.

Every Tuesday, Landrieu has lunch at a local restaurant with his parents, who are both in their 80s. During a recent meal he approached an older couple he knew to say a quick hello. The wife was wearing a scowl as she leaned in close. “You ruined my life,” she said, twice, then added, “You destroyed my life.” “What did I do?” Landrieu asked, revealing a streak of political confidence that dances along the edge of disrespect. “You took the monuments down,” she said. Landrieu replied, “Are you dying? Did it give you cancer?”

He asserts he did more than just take down the monuments. He also took away something intangible and yet just as weighty as all that bronze and marble: pride. “There is a white Christian ethnic identity that people have tied onto and somehow connected to the Confederacy,” Landrieu says. “They feel like somebody has taken something away from them.”

JASON DOUGHERTY, a 38-year-old white Hazleton resident who works in an Italian diner and stunt fights on the weekends at a converted church called the Sanctuary, thinks that the city has never reckoned with its transformation. “People want to say it is not about race,” he says, “but sometimes it is, and what happened in Hazleton is about difference, and that doesn’t mean it is bad. This place has an energy that just wasn’t there before.”

Hazleton’s population is younger, the hospital is no longer in bankruptcy, and major employers such as Amazon, Cargill, and American Eagle

## **‘The whole notion of whiteness as we know it depends on not being a minority.’**

—BRIAN GLOVER,  
*Race Card Project respondent*

Outfitters have opened distribution centers and plants offering jobs that helped attract the massive Latino migration. Longazel says white residents “miss the opportunity to see that the old-timers and the newcomers came to Hazleton for the same thing: They wanted jobs and a better life for their families. They actually have things in common.”

There are groups working to build cultural bridges. It’s not surprising that many of them, such as the Hazleton Integration Project, focus on young people. Rocco Petrone is the principal of Hazleton Area High School, and he says he knows better than to toss around bromides, such as, “Kids today simply don’t see race.”

A recent survey found that young adults overwhelmingly believe that race relations in the U.S. grew worse last year. Young people have inherited a diverse world. They attend school together, listen to each other’s music, and date across the color line. What will it take to actually shift attitudes as young white people march into adulthood?

Kids have found a way to do something that is more rare among adults. They talk to each other. Yes, they roll their eyes and show annoyance, but they engage and they listen. They cheer for each other on the court and the football field, and they take for granted that a blond homecoming queen named Savannah Butala from the advanced math and science program was crowned alongside a star student named Rafael Santos, who came to Hazleton from the Dominican Republic in 2011.

Few communities have seen the kind of rapid change that Hazleton has. It has produced a lot of discomfort and disorientation, and perhaps a good deal of disgust. Longtime residents are angry about crime, overcrowded schools, and the city budget crisis. They are frustrated that those who are bilingual get paid more or have an easier time moving up the management ladder. Dougherty understands that but says if you look closely, you also see that the changes in Hazleton have produced a lot of discoveries and adjustments. He sees it in his own neighborhood, where people are finally starting to talk to each other, and with co-workers willing to share a beer after work or go to a barbershop together. He sees it at the

Sanctuary, where he performs; people there are a bit less tribal, a bit more willing to root for someone who doesn’t share their heritage.

On a weekday morning at the A&L Lounge, Sacco, who is 64, tends bar from a sunken galley that resembles an orchestra pit. The regulars always sit at the bar, close to the televisions and close enough to each other to catch up on town gossip. They drink highballs or beer on tap. They wear work boots and plaid. The tables in the back are where Latino men sit in a circle for a cold one after finishing their overnight shifts in local plants. They have high-maintenance haircuts and fancy tennis shoes. They drink Heineken and Corona, pay in \$20 bills, and always leave a tip for Sacco.

They also give him tips on how to speak Spanish. He used to find that irksome, but he has warmed to it. “I should have taken those Spanish classes seriously back in high school, but you know, who knew this was coming?” he said.

Immigrants have been flocking to Hazleton for decades. Putting down roots. Working hard. Raising families. Striving. Climbing. Spending money in local businesses. But the word “immigrant” takes on a different tone now. Older Hazleton residents who are themselves the children of immigrants often say the word with a sneer.

Sacco loved growing up in Hazleton and keeps a collection of memorabilia that shows the town as it was in the era he considers its heyday, when Broad Street had supper clubs and theaters with neon lights. He’s angry about the changes in his hometown. Really angry.

And yet, does he resent the men who come to his bar and spend money? After all, they represent the change that chafes so much. “Hard to be angry at them,” he said. “They are just working hard, and I respect that. I guess you have to respect that.” □

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### **The Race Card Project**

In 2010 Michele Norris began inviting people to distill their thoughts on race to just six words. Today more than 200,000 statements have been submitted from every U.S. state and 90 countries, often accompanied by essays with sentiments and hard truths rarely expressed out loud. To join the discussion, visit [theracecardproject.com](http://theracecardproject.com).

# THE STOP

Black motorists are pulled over by police at rates exceeding those for whites. It's a flash point in the national debate over race, as many minorities see a troubling message: You don't belong here.







BY **MICHAEL A. FLETCHER**  
PHOTOGRAPHS BY **WAYNE LAWRENCE**

**A**n idyllic afternoon of Little League baseball followed by pizza and Italian ice turned harrowing when two police officers in Bridgeport, Connecticut, stopped Woodrow Vereen, Jr., for driving through a yellow light.

A music minister at his church, Vereen struggled to maintain eye contact with his young sons as one of the officers instructed Vereen, who is black, to get out of the car and lean over the trunk, and then patted him down. Vereen could see tears welling in the eyes of his seven- and three-year-old sons as they peered through the rear window. He cringed as folks at a nearby bus stop watched one of the officers look through his car.

He never consented to the 2015 search, which turned up nothing illegal. The American Civil Liberties Union of Connecticut sued on behalf of Vereen, alleging that police searched him without probable cause. Last year, two years after the incident, he received a settlement from the city. His tickets—for running a light and not carrying proof of insurance—were dismissed.

Yet the stop lives with him.

Traffic stops—the most common interaction between police and the public—have become a focal point in the debate about race, law enforcement, and equality in America. A disproportionate share of the estimated 20 million police traffic stops in the United States each year involve black drivers, even though they are no more likely to break traffic laws than whites. Black and Hispanic motorists are more likely than whites to be

**About this story:** The *Undeclared*—an ESPN website that explores the intersection of race, culture, and sports—teamed up with *National Geographic* to ask people of color across the U.S. what it's like to be racially profiled during a traffic stop, and the ripple effect such incidents can have on families and communities. This report also will appear on *TheUndeclared.com*.

## JAHMAL COLE

**West 95th Street,  
Chicago, Illinois  
(Stopped in 2017)**

Cole was pulled over near his Chicago home by a police officer who wrongly claimed he was not wearing a seat belt. Cole, whose aunt had been accidentally shot and killed by a Chicago officer in 2015, said it was his fourth police stop in a two-month period.

## WOODROW VEREEN, JR.

(previous page)

**Fairfield Avenue,  
Bridgeport, Connecticut  
(2015)**

Vereen's two young sons were riding with him when he was stopped and searched by police for running a yellow light. He won a cash settlement after suing police over the illegal search and now struggles with what to tell his children about how to regard the police.

## ONLINE

To hear more about the experiences of those who were interviewed for this story, go to [ngm.com/thestop](http://ngm.com/thestop).

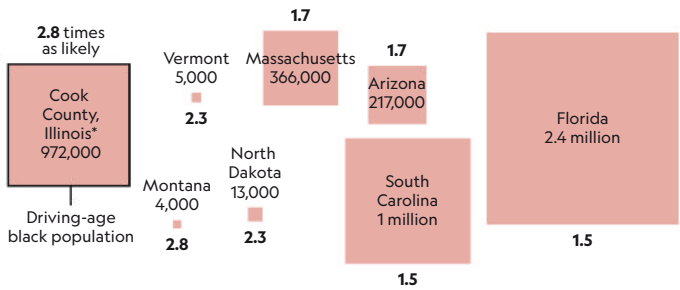




## DIVIDED HIGHWAYS

When Stanford University researchers requested highway traffic-stop data from all 50 states, about half responded, but many states didn't track race. What the researchers discovered, however, paints a data picture of what had long been anecdotal: In 2015 black American motorists were more likely to be stopped, searched, and arrested than white drivers, even though they were no more likely to be carrying contraband.

Nearly 14 million black Americans of driving age live in the 17 states where data are available; results show they are more likely to be stopped than whites.



searched by police, although they are no more likely to be carrying contraband.

Across the country, law-abiding black and Hispanic drivers are left frightened and humiliated by the inordinate attention they receive from police, who too often see them as criminals. Such treatment leaves minorities feeling violated, angry, and wary of police and their motives.

Activists have taken to the streets to protest police shootings of unarmed black people. Athletes, including National Football League players, have knelt or raised clenched fists during the singing of the national anthem at sports events to try to shine a light on lingering inequality.

Vereen had always told his children that the police were real-life superheroes. Now that story had to change. “Everything I told them seems to be untrue,” said Vereen, 34. “Why is this superhero trying to hurt my dad? Why is this superhero doing this to us? He is supposed to be on our side.”

**THE FIRST TIME** my now 28-year-old son was stopped by police, he was a high school student in Baltimore, Maryland. He was headed to a barber shop when he was startled by flashing lights and the sight of two police cars pulling up behind him. The stop lasted just a few minutes and resulted in no ticket. It seems the cops just wanted to check him out. My son's fear morphed into indignation when an officer returned his license, saying, “A lot of vehicles like yours are stolen.” He was driving a Honda Civic, one of the most popular cars on the road.

Shaken by cases in which seemingly routine traffic stops turn deadly, many black parents rehearse with their children what to do if they are pulled over: Lower your car window so officers have a clear line of sight, turn on the interior

lights, keep your hands visible, have your license and registration accessible, and for God's sake, let the officer know you are reaching for them so he doesn't shoot you.

Drivers of all races worry about running afoul of the rules of the road. But blacks and Hispanics, in particular, also worry about being stopped if they are driving a nice car in a modest or upscale community, a raggedy car in a mostly white one, or any kind of car in a high-crime area. It affects everyone, from ministers and professional athletes to lawyers and the super-rich.

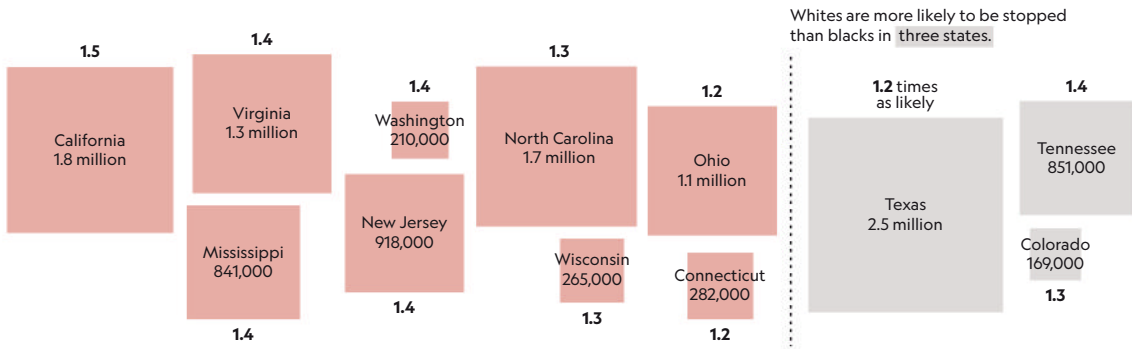
“It's been more times than I care to remember,” said Robert F. Smith, 55, a private equity titan and philanthropist, when asked how often he thinks he has been racially profiled. Smith, with a net worth of more than three billion dollars, is listed by *Forbes* as the nation's wealthiest African American. Yet he still dreads being pulled over.

“A very familiar feeling comes each time I'm stopped,” he said. “And that's the same feeling I got the first time I was stopped, when I was 17 years old.”

Rosie Villegas-Smith, a Mexican-born U.S. citizen who has lived in Phoenix, Arizona, for 28 years, has been stopped a couple of times by Maricopa County sheriff's deputies, who are notorious for using allegations of minor traffic violations to check the immigration status of Hispanic drivers.

In 2011 federal investigators found that the department pulled over Hispanic drivers up to nine times more often than other motorists. The stops were part of a crackdown on undocumented immigrants ordered by Joe Arpaio, the Maricopa County sheriff from 1993 to 2016.

Courts ruled the stops illegal, but Arpaio pressed ahead and was found guilty of criminal



contempt in July 2017. President Donald Trump—who has stoked racial tensions by bashing immigrants, protesting athletes, and others—pardoned Arpaio the following month. Arpaio recently announced plans to run for a seat in the U.S. Senate.

The statistics on traffic stops elsewhere are spotty—neither uniformly available nor comprehensive—but they show the same pattern of blacks and Hispanics being stopped and searched more frequently than others. The disparity spans the nation, affecting drivers in urban, suburban, and rural areas. Men are more at risk than women, and for black men, being disproportionately singled out is virtually a universal experience.

A 2017 study in Connecticut, one of the few states that collect and analyze comprehensive traffic-stop data, found that police disproportionately pull over black and Hispanic drivers during daylight hours, when officers can more easily see who is behind the wheel. Many police departments have policies and training to prevent racial profiling, but those rules can get lost in day-to-day police work.

“One reason minorities are stopped disproportionately is because police see violations where they are,” said Louis Dekmar, president of the International Association of Chiefs of Police, who runs the police department in LaGrange, Georgia. “Crime is often significantly higher in minority neighborhoods than elsewhere. And that is where we allocate our resources. That is the paradox.”

Too often, officers treat minorities driving in mostly white areas as suspect, Dekmar said. “It’s wrong, and there is no excuse for that,” he said.

**ROBERT L. WILKINS** was a public defender in 1992, when he and several family members were stopped by a Maryland state trooper while

returning to Washington, D.C., from his grandfather’s funeral in Chicago. The trooper accused them of speeding, then asked to search their rented Cadillac. “If you’ve got nothing to hide, then what’s your problem?” the trooper said when they objected to the search on principle.

The trooper made them wait for a drug-sniffing dog. As Wilkins and his family stood on the side of the highway, a German shepherd sniffed “seemingly every square inch of the car’s exterior,” Wilkins recalls. Before long, there were five or six police cars around them. At one point, Wilkins, now a judge on the U.S. Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia, noticed a white couple and their two children staring as they rode by. He imagined that they thought the worst: “They’re putting two and two together and getting five,” he said. “They see black people and they’re thinking, ‘These are bad people.’”

Wilkins filed a class-action suit alleging an illegal search and racial profiling, and the state of Maryland settled, largely because of an unearthed police document that had warned troopers to be on the lookout for black men in rental cars, who were suspected of ferrying crack cocaine. The settlement required state police to keep statistics on the race and ethnicity of drivers who were stopped. A second suit forced police to revamp their complaint system. Those changes brought some improvement, and racial disparities in traffic stops in Maryland were cut in half.

What lingers, though, is the indignity and anger that drivers feel over being singled out. “There’s a power that they want to exert, that you have to experience. And what do you do about it?” Smith said. “There’s an embedded terror in our community, and that’s just wrong.” □

## JUDGE ROBERT L. WILKINS

**I-68, Exit 43C, Cumberland, Maryland (1992)**

Wilkins and three family members were detained and the exterior of their rental car was searched by a drug-sniffing dog after a state trooper stopped them for allegedly speeding in 1992. The American Civil Liberties Union brought a class-action lawsuit against the state police, and the state of Maryland settled in 1995, marking one of the earliest cases holding police accountable for racial profiling. The settlement required the state police to track traffic stops and searches by race, which revealed large racial disparities that prompted policy changes, including a more transparent complaint process for motorists. The racial disparities in traffic stops in Maryland are now smaller, but they continue.



## DEBORAH WRIGHT

**Dixwell Avenue and Benham Road, Hamden, Connecticut (2014)**

Wright was stopped by a Hamden police officer who sharply demanded her license and registration. His tone shifted when he realized that she served on the civilian police commission in nearby West Haven, and he politely explained that the registration sticker on her car had expired.









## BOBBY MCGEE AND FAMILY

**South Princeton Avenue,  
Chicago, Illinois  
(multiple dates)**

Almost all of the adults in the McGee family, shown here near the South Side home of Bobby McGee (far right), say they have been racially profiled or mistreated by Chicago police. The repeated encounters have resulted in an entrenched wariness of the officers sworn to protect them.

'I'M AN UPSTANDING CITIZEN.  
I TAKE CARE OF MY CHILDREN  
AND DO THE BEST TO PROVIDE FOR  
THEM, SO I FEEL DISGUSTED AND  
HORRIFIED THAT PEOPLE GOING  
TO WORK EVERY DAY, DOING THEIR  
BEST, ARE AT THE MERCY OF  
VIOLENT, IRRATIONAL PEOPLE  
WITH POWER.'

—SHELLY QUILES

Chicago police repeatedly have been the subject of lawsuits and investigations that found officers used excessive force when dealing with black and Hispanic residents, and of complaints that cases involving alleged police misconduct were mishandled. In 2013 Shelly (McGee) Quiles (third from right) was pulled over by an officer for chatting on her cell phone as she drove home on Lake Shore Drive. A graduate student at the University of Chicago and pregnant with her third child at the time, Quiles says she was stunned when the officer immediately started yelling at her. She says he grabbed her by the lapels and threatened her. The abuse continued until a rattled Quiles hollered, “The blood of Jesus! The blood of Jesus!” The officer then wrote her a ticket for talking on the phone while driving, balled it up, and threw it at her, she says. She filed a complaint against the officer, alleging abuse. A panel that reviewed police conduct found the complaint to be unfounded, as was the case for 99 percent of citizen complaints filed against the city police department from March 2011 to December 2015.



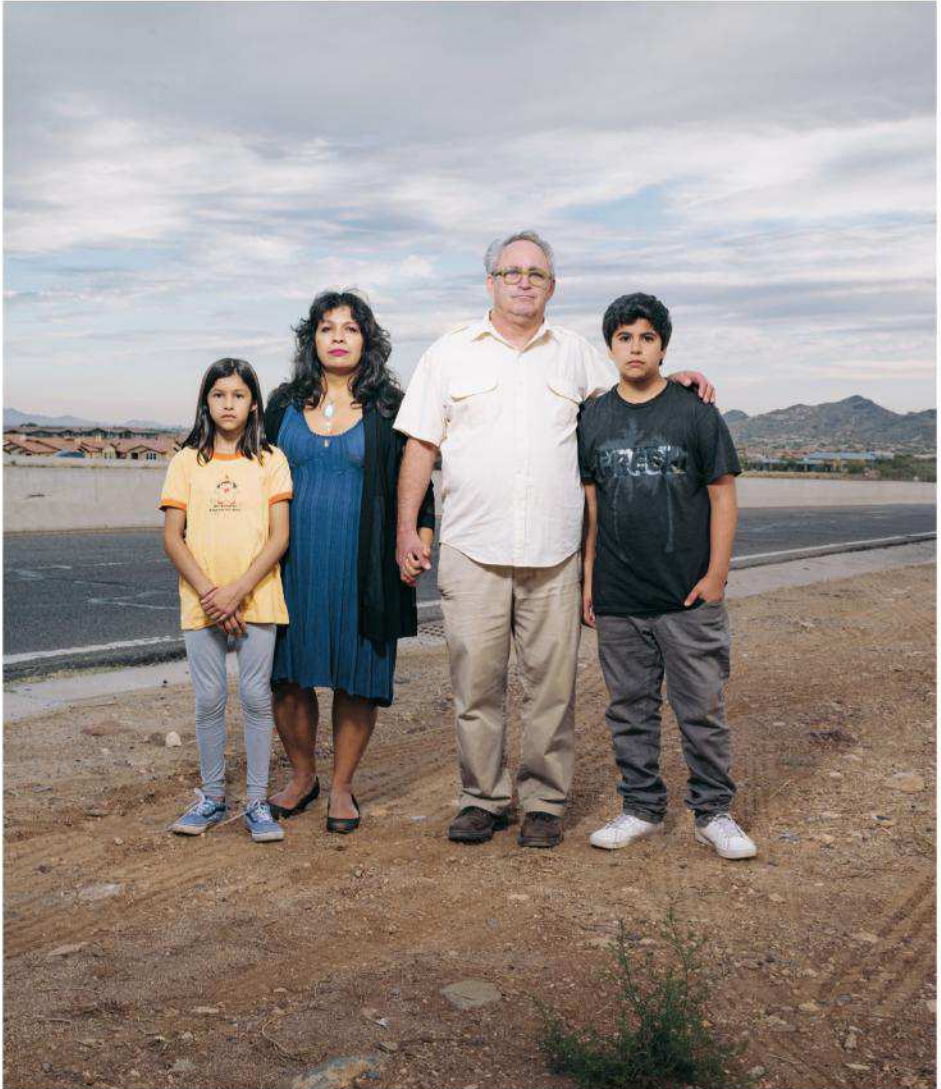
'THE HOSTILITY  
THAT I FELT  
WHEN I WAS 17  
IS SOMETHING  
YOU DON'T  
FORGET.'

—ROBERT F. SMITH

## ROBERT F. SMITH

South Monaco Parkway, Denver, Colorado (1979)

Smith, a multibillionaire software investor, says he was 17 the first time he was stopped by police. Since then, it's happened repeatedly. Once, an officer crossed the median of a four-lane highway and pulled him over because Smith's new car had a temporary, and legal, rear license plate instead of permanent plates on both the front and rear. Another time, while he was driving a sports car at six a.m., en route to a gym, Smith was stopped and unfairly cited for driving through a school crossing light. Smith timed and recorded the flashing light prior to his day in court. "I drive that route every day to drop my children off, so I know when school starts and I know when the flashing light starts," he said. "Here you are, a middle-aged, African-American male, driving a nice car, not doing anything wrong, yet you are followed. You know they are pulling your plates."



## GARRETT SMITH AND ROSIE VILLEGAS-SMITH

Interstate 17, Exit 229, and West Anthem Way, Anthem, Arizona (2009)

The Smiths were pulled over by a Maricopa County, Arizona, sheriff's deputy who said they were going five miles an hour over the speed limit. They suspect they were stopped because everyone in the car except Garrett was of Mexican descent.





'SEEING THE COLOR OF  
OUR SKIN AND SEEING THAT  
I HAD LANDSCAPING TOOLS,  
I THINK THAT'S WHAT  
TRIGGERED THE STOP.'

—DANIEL MAGOS

## DANIEL MAGOS

**South 27th Avenue and  
West Durango Street,  
Phoenix, Arizona (2009)**

Daniel and his wife, Eva, were stopped and searched by a Maricopa County sheriff's deputy who said he could not read the license plate on their pickup truck. The stop ended without a ticket, but the humiliation of the roadside encounter consumed the couple, even as Eva lay on her deathbed in 2016.

**D**ANIEL MAGOS was headed to a home improvement job when a Maricopa County sheriff's deputy pulled up next to his car, slowed his cruiser to a crawl, and stared at Daniel and his wife, Eva. The deputy made a U-turn, put on his emergency lights, and pulled up behind them. County Sheriff Joe Arpaio's department was then under federal investigation for illegally detaining thousands of Hispanics in the Phoenix area as part of a crackdown on undocumented immigrants. Daniel and his wife were U.S. citizens, yet their brown skin apparently caused them to be caught in Arpaio's dragnet.

Yelling, the deputy approached with his right hand on his gun and demanded their driver's licenses. The deputy then searched Eva's purse and frisked Daniel but found nothing illegal. The deputy let them go, but the Magoses were embarrassed and furious. Daniel, now 72, joined a class-action lawsuit that led a federal judge to rule that Arpaio's department had engaged in racial profiling and unlawful traffic stops. Unbowed, Arpaio persisted with his tactics and was found in contempt of court, only to be pardoned by President Donald Trump. The humiliation of the stop weighed heavily on Eva until she died seven years later, Daniel says.





## **COREY MASON**

**East 46th Street,  
Chicago, Illinois (2017)**

Mason says he was often harassed by police growing up. Now a college graduate and co-founder of a youth activist group, he was stopped just doors from his home as he was returning from a community-organizing event. The police said his parking lights were on. He was not ticketed.







## ANQUAN BOLDIN AND C.J. JONES

**PGA Boulevard and  
Interstate 95, Palm Beach  
Gardens, Florida (2015)**

Former pro football player Anquan Boldin (at left) stands with his cousin C.J. Jones near the spot where Jones's brother, Corey, was fatally shot by a Palm Beach Gardens police officer. Officer Nouman Raja was fired and is under house arrest, awaiting trial on charges of manslaughter and attempted first-degree murder with a firearm.

'I DON'T THINK, IN THIS COUNTRY,  
BREAKING DOWN ON THE SIDE OF  
THE ROAD SHOULD BE A DEATH  
SENTENCE FOR ANYONE. AND, FOR  
WHAT MY FAMILY IS GOING  
THROUGH AT THIS MOMENT,  
I DON'T WISH THAT ON ANYBODY.'

—ANQUAN BOLDIN

**P**olice shootings during traffic stops are statistically rare, but disproportionately occur with black and Hispanic drivers. The pain these events bring to families and the damage they cause to attitudes toward police are incalculable. NFL wide receiver Anquan Boldin, 37, retired in 2017 after a 14-year career, in part because his younger cousin Corey Jones was killed by a plainclothes police officer while Jones was on a call arranging a tow truck for his disabled SUV. Boldin has struggled to reconcile his memory of Jones—always smiling, never confrontational—with his violent death. Now Boldin is working to bring awareness to the case and others like it.

He says few white people grasp the indignities endured by many African Americans. Growing up in Florida, Boldin remembers going to stores with his friends and being allowed inside only one at a time. As a millionaire athlete, he has been pulled over repeatedly. “As a young kid, you know something’s not right, but you can’t quite put your finger on it,” Boldin says. “And then, the older you get, the more you realize exactly what it is.”

# A Place of Their Own

As racial tensions escalate, historically black colleges are seeing a surge in enrollment and a new brand of activism.



Alpha Phi Alpha fraternity alumni at Clark Atlanta University welcome new members (left) of the oldest Greek-lettered organization for African Americans, which counts Frederick Douglass, W.E.B. Du Bois, and Martin Luther King, Jr., in its ranks.

NINA ROBINSON

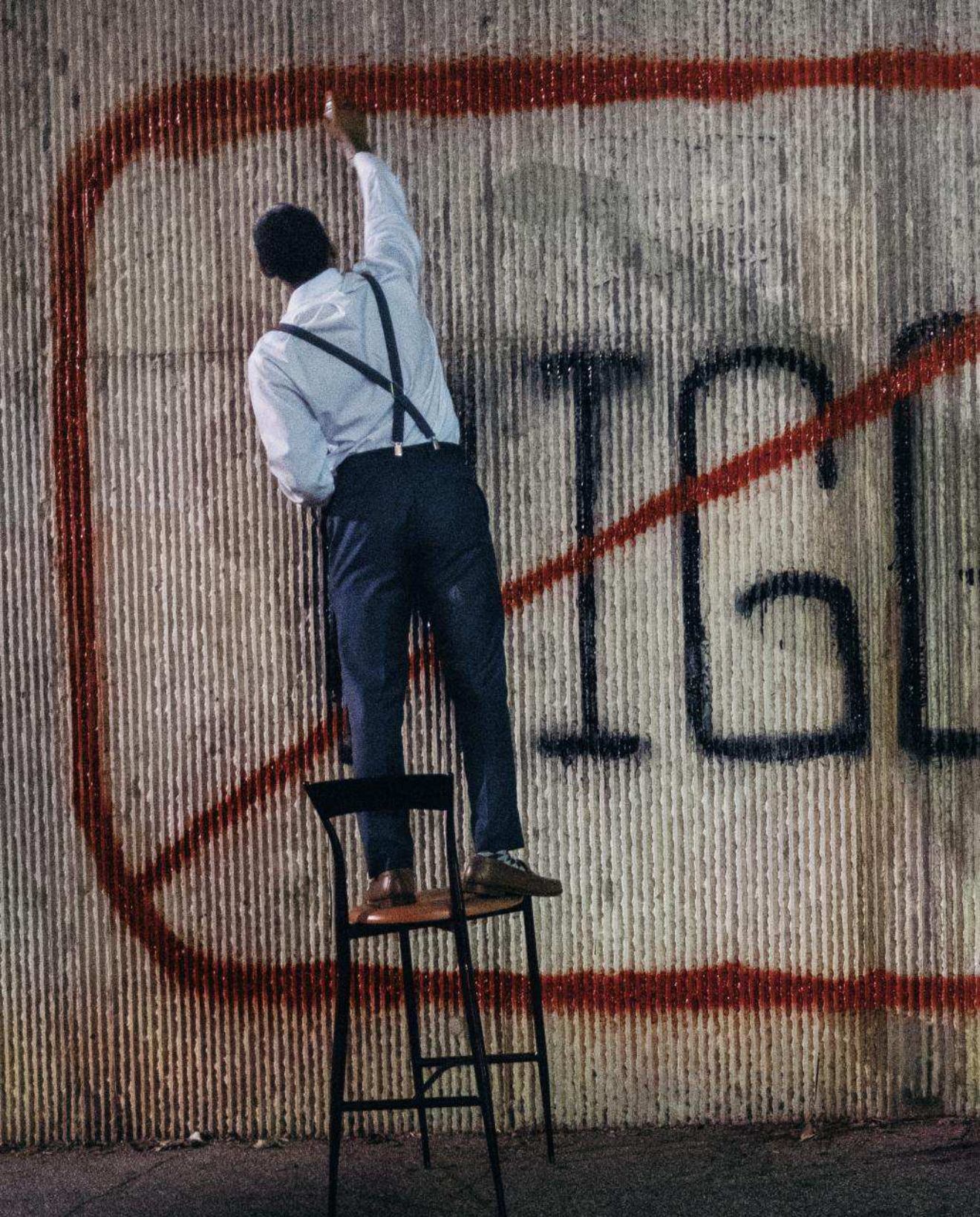


Maura Chanz Washington, a 2015 graduate of Spelman College, the top-rated historically black institution, returned to campus to commemorate Founders Day, April 11, 1881. It's one of the most celebrated days of the academic year at this college for women.

NINA ROBINSON







Morehouse College student government leaders John Cooper and Kamren Rollins paint a sign on campus to stimulate discussion about the N-word. Another student passes by wearing a T-shirt with an image of the late rap artist Tupac Shakur, who used the term liberally in his lyrics.

RADCLIFFE "RUDDY" ROYE





By Clint Smith

Photographs by  
Nina Robinson and Radcliffe “Ruddy” Roye

**It’s the time of year when spring begins to graze the nascent stages of summer. The aroma from food trucks permeates the air while vendors encircle the amphitheater. Students meander among tables selling T-shirts emblazoned with phrases like “Respect This Melanin,” posters of activists such as Muhammad Ali and Angela Davis, and displays of recycled earth-tone jewelry.**

At the end of nearly every week, students from Morehouse College, Spelman College, and Clark Atlanta University—adjacent historically black colleges that are part of the Atlanta University Center (AUC)—gather on Spelman’s campus in southwest Atlanta to inaugurate the weekend at the aptly named Market Friday. Stories of these events were a fixture around the dinner table in my home. My mother, sister, aunt, and wife all attended Spelman. My father and his brother went to Morehouse. Still, it’s one thing to hear about such an event, quite another to experience it for yourself.

This is the last Market Friday of the semester, the final one ever for graduating seniors. Market Fridays give students an opportunity to convene beyond classrooms and dormitories, and allow fraternities and sororities to show off choreographed dance and step routines, performances

they’ve often spent months practicing. These organizations’ history is tied to public service and advocacy, and their social communities are the bedrock upon which that work is done.

The groups take the stage—sometimes separately, sometimes together—and move their bodies in an astonishing display of fervor and synchronization. Their movements are imbued with equal parts joy and vehemence as they slide their feet in concert across the brick surface.

As I sit among the students, the thump of their favorite hip-hop tracks disseminates across the campus and intermingles with boisterous laughter—the kind of laughter that only a Friday afternoon with friends can bring.

This moment is one of celebration, but it’s also true that many of these students’ lives have been animated by a sense of civic and political urgency following a stream of racist incidents





Yes, if you want to say that I was a drum major,  
say that I was a drum major  
for justice,  
say that I was a drum major  
for peace,  
say that I was a drum major  
for righteousness.

Atlanta, 1968



**Freshmen enter the Morehouse chapel named for Martin Luther King, Jr., whose words are etched on the wall. The weekly, required Crown Forum assembly introduces leaders who address issues of the day. The all-male college aims to develop disciplined men who will lead lives of scholarship and service.**

on predominantly white college campuses, several years in which footage of police killings of unarmed black men and women has felt omnipresent, and the election of a president whose actions have encouraged racial animus. Even before he took office, Donald Trump repeatedly tried to raise doubts about the legitimacy of the African-American president these students grew up with, by questioning whether Barack Obama had been born in the United States.

For many African Americans and others, the cascade of events has been astonishing to observe and exhausting to be a part of, which is

why watching a group of young, black college students dance and step and laugh to the music of their choosing, on their own terms, without concern for anyone but themselves, is a small but welcome respite.

The irony of students experiencing this profound joy is that the very existence of historically black colleges and universities (HBCUs) is inextricably linked to a history of enslavement and Reconstruction. Few white colleges were willing to accept black students after the Civil War ended in 1865. The primary way black students could receive higher education was to set up their own institutions.

Today students at Morehouse and Spelman are seen by many as exemplars of the black community, the best and brightest, who have chosen these schools despite having opportunities to go to other prestigious institutions that previous





Morehouse adjunct professor La'Neice Littleton, left, debates use of the N-word. "When we attempt to appropriate a term that is negative in origin, or even suggest that there's affirmation in the use of the term, we display the ways in which we love our own oppression." Some students disagree.

RADCLIFFE "RUDDY" ROYE

generations of black Americans could never have dreamed of attending.

This is not an accident. Many black students have pivoted to HBCUs recently out of concern that their comfort, safety, and humanity are under siege. Enrollment at many HBCUs, which surged in 2016 and 2017, cannot be disentangled from students' rising concerns about a world that seems to consistently devalue and dehumanize them. This precariousness has led to a political awakening at institutions with long traditions of activism.

Morehouse was originally founded in Augusta, Georgia, as the Augusta Theological Institute in 1867, one of several black colleges established that year. It was in the early days of a nation that was trying to heal and reinvent itself, a country moving toward the daunting project of creating a multiracial democracy only a couple of years after it ended the enslavement of more than four million of its black citizens.

The current campus is on one of the sites where Gen. William T. Sherman and his soldiers battled Confederate forces in the Atlanta siege of 1864. The Reverend Martin Luther King, Jr., is among the all-male school's esteemed alumni.

Spelman began in a church basement in 1881 as the Atlanta Baptist Female Seminary, started by two teachers from Massachusetts, Harriet E. Giles and Sophia B. Packard, who sought to create a school for black women after Reconstruction. Spelman has the highest graduation rate of the nation's more than a hundred historically black colleges, and is among the top liberal arts schools in the country. The school was one of only a handful of U.S. colleges designated by the National Science Foundation and NASA as Model Institutions for Excellence to encourage undergraduate science and mathematics education. Its alumnae include Pulitzer Prize-winning novelist Alice Walker and civil rights activist Marian Wright Edelman, founder of the Children's Defense Fund.

I MEET AVERY JACKSON outside the food court on Morehouse's campus. He's tall and slender with dark brown skin and eyebrows that arch at their edges so as to give an impression of subtle yet unabated inquiry. He is calm and thoughtful

**Students at Clark Atlanta University work on a chemistry lesson. Historically black colleges account for nearly half of the top 50 schools that produce black students who go on to receive graduate degrees in science, technology, engineering, and math.**



as he speaks, merging discernment with a steady stream of consciousness—processing his ideas as he says them out loud. The hair on either side of his head is closely shaved, leaving a tangle of short, black dreadlocks on top. His left nostril is pierced with a small silver ring, and he has a constellation of black-ink tattoos that travel up his left arm. He's wearing jeans and a tie-dyed green shirt with the words "KNOW THY SELF," appropriate for a young man who has spent his time at Morehouse trying to make sense of who he is.

A senior sociology major, Jackson grew up in Des Moines, Iowa. His parents worked to ensure that the prevailing whiteness of the schools there didn't shape the value system of their four sons. "My mom wants us to feel like the standard, or the norm, instead of feeling as if we were not in the right place," he says.

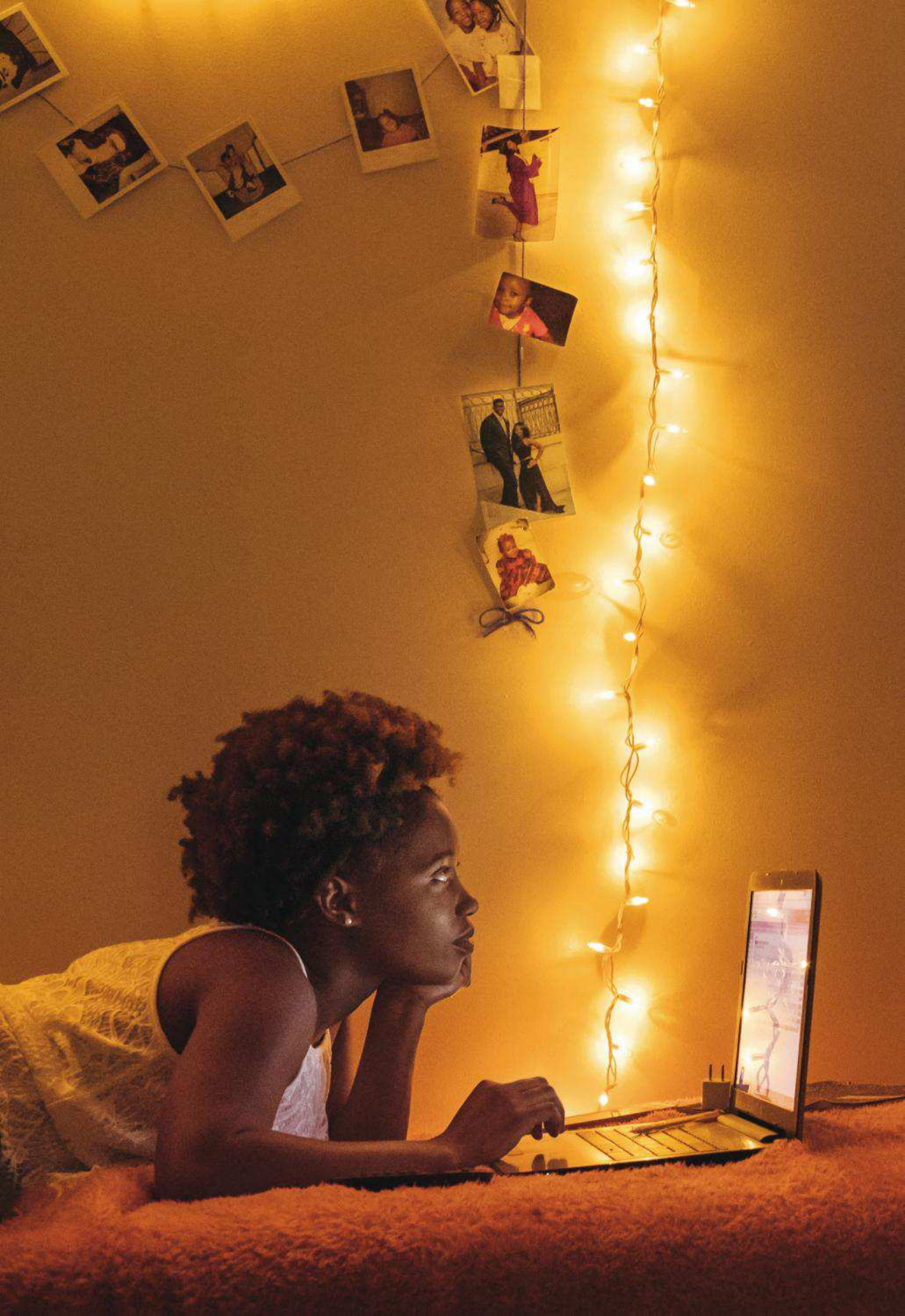
In high school Jackson was a member of the

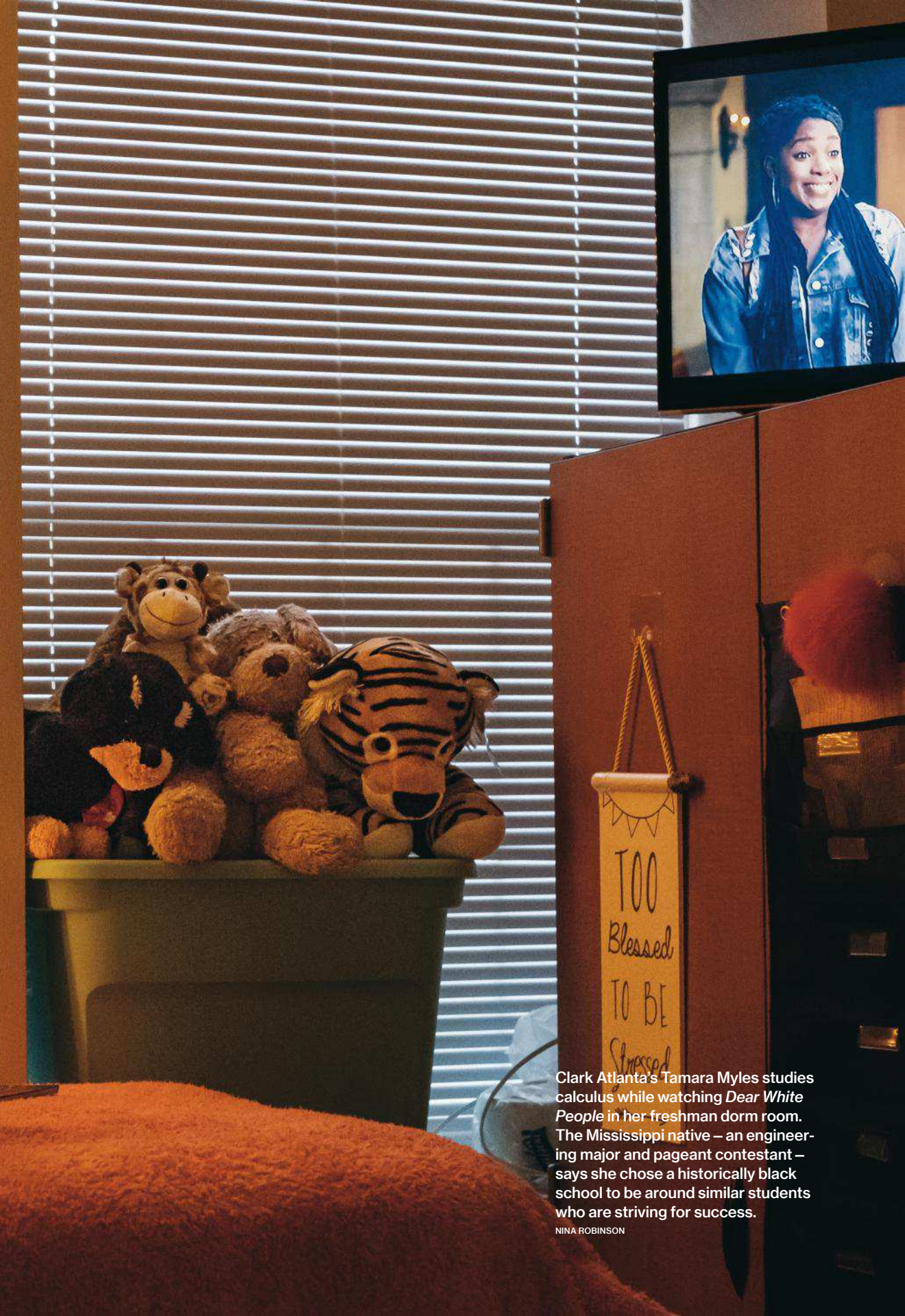


NAACP youth council but became disillusioned after what he deemed an inadequate response to the 2012 death of Trayvon Martin, a 17-year-old unarmed black boy who was killed in Florida by a neighborhood watch volunteer as he walked home from picking up snacks at a convenience store. Jackson had been at a national NAACP conference not far away, in Orlando. After the shooting, some of the group's leaders, Jackson says, tried to prevent young members from leaving the conference's hotel to protest, suggesting they shouldn't go out into the street. "That was... one of the big, big, big, shifting moments for me," he says. At Morehouse he remained involved with the NAACP, but he ultimately left the group in search of more aggressive activism. Jackson was one of the students who began an organization they call AUC Shut It Down, which had a more radical approach to challenging systemic racism.

The group protested when Hillary Clinton went to Morehouse in 2015 during her presidential campaign because they didn't believe Clinton would adequately represent their political interests, and they were particularly concerned that someone who once implied that gangs of black youths were "superpredators" was vying to become president of the United States.

The protest led longtime civil rights activist and congressman John Lewis, whose district includes the AUC schools, to plead with the students to let Clinton speak. AUC Shut It Down—like many groups of young activists that arose after the 2014 killing of another unarmed black teenager, Michael Brown, by a police officer in Ferguson, Missouri—had an intersectional framework: It aimed to address issues of race, gender, and sexual orientation together, rather than separately.





Clark Atlanta's Tamara Myles studies calculus while watching *Dear White People* in her freshman dorm room. The Mississippi native – an engineering major and pageant contestant – says she chose a historically black school to be around similar students who are striving for success.

NINA ROBINSON



HISTORICALLY BLACK colleges and universities may not be perceived as diverse because the majority of students are part of the African diaspora, but the campuses abound with students of different social backgrounds, contrasting political dispositions, and varying notions of what progress and activism look like.

There are students such as Imani Dixon, a Spelman senior when I first meet her, from Charlotte, North Carolina. Dixon sits across from me in a navy blue blazer and white blouse, her natural, curly hair reaching her shoulders. Growing up, Dixon attended a mixed-race school but was one of few black students in her advanced classes. Most top students from her high school went to the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill or North Carolina State in Raleigh, but Dixon realized she wanted to be in a place that reminded her every day that black people, when given the

opportunities and the resources, could thrive. “So that’s ultimately why I chose Spelman.”

Dixon’s mother, Kendra Johnson, said that her daughter “immediately had this incredible zeal for what she felt like the school stood for and what it would mean to her and her development as a young African-American woman.”

If she’d chosen an in-state school, Dixon—one of the top students in her high school—would likely have had to pay very little to go to college. Spelman, on the other hand, didn’t provide much tuition assistance, but Johnson was determined to find the money for her daughter to enroll, taking out loans in her name rather than Dixon’s. “It was important enough for her to attend this school,” she says. Spelman “was where I believed she should be.”

Dixon says that at Spelman, for the first time in her life she could have conversations about





Morehouse freshmen designed T-shirts to call attention to sexual assault issues on campus. It's one of several efforts by students directed at supporting and protecting fellow students. Morehouse's new president, David A. Thomas, vows to take a tough stand, saying, "Morehouse has a zero-tolerance policy toward sexual assault and sexual harassment."

the history of black feminism while listening to the newest Drake song. "I wanted to have those conversations, stimulating conversations"—she shimmies her shoulders and laughs—"but still turn up at the same time," she says, referring to being able to party with friends.

Being at a school with a deep commitment to black history at a time of such profound racialized social tumult made Dixon more politically conscious and engaged. Classes such as African Diaspora and the World—a required course at Spelman, in which class discussions put police brutality, the criminal justice system, and black poverty in historical context—changed her outlook in a way that her friends back home couldn't always understand.

"They think I'm like this hippie now," she says, "because I'm talking about intersectionality and, you know, changing the black narrative, and how

we're an oppressed group of people, and feminism and how it's different from womanism, and patriarchal inequalities."

Unlike Jackson, Dixon committed herself to changing things from within existing institutions. She was elected president of Spelman's Student Government Association, and she implemented initiatives that reflected her political awakening. She worked with local organizations to fight gentrification in neighborhoods near campus, pushed for more services for sexual assault victims, promoted voter education and registration drives, and brought attention to how black women often are overlooked in the national conversation about police violence. Now Dixon has a job in marketing in New York and hopes to continue working on social justice matters.

SPELMAN WAS FOUNDED with a mission to serve black women. But evolving definitions of gender have pushed the school, and many other single-sex schools across the country, to reconsider whom they're serving while staying true to their values. Some students and alumnae have been more willing to accommodate increasingly blurred gender lines, but others worry that it risks compromising the school's tradition. After months of debate that considered years of research as well as student, alumnae, and administrative input, Spelman announced last September that it would admit people who self-identify as women and have been living as such at the time of their application, and would allow students who transition from women to men during their time at Spelman to remain and graduate.

Janae' Sumter, a graduating senior from New Orleans, says that Spelman has "definitely evolved" on LGBTQ issues. When I meet Sumter, she's wearing a tattered pink cap that sits loosely and diagonally on her head. Thick, tightly coiled red dreadlocks fall down to her shoulders, and a large pair of clear, round glasses sits on the bridge of her nose. An artist and community organizer, Sumter had been co-president of Afrekete, an LGBTQ organization on campus.

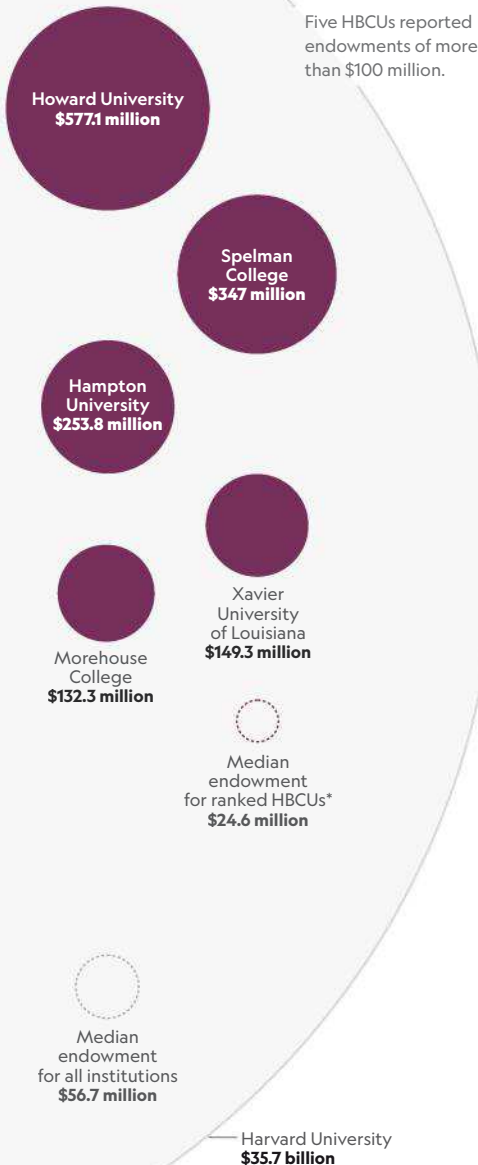
"I remember my first year," she says. "We have something called Pride Week and do chalking

## SUCCEEDING WITH LESS

Howard University has the largest endowment among the United States' historically black colleges and universities (HBCUs). But its endowment equals less than 2 percent of Harvard University's nearly \$36 billion, the largest collegiate endowment in the country.

### ENDOWMENT FUNDS

Fiscal year 2016



[writing words of support on sidewalks] and celebration, and we had... a few groups of students [who] wrote Scriptures underneath it." The implication was that being homosexual runs counter to Christianity, a notion Sumter rejects.

Sumter and her friends have pushed the school to be more responsive: "People are coming around. People are trying to understand."

Sumter says she's also a survivor of sexual assault, an increasingly urgent issue at Spelman and other campuses across the country. Through her art and her activism, she has tried to bring this topic to light. During Afrekete's "Coming Out Monologues," Sumter opened up about her personal journey. "That was the first time I've ever shared my story to the public or with myself. I think from there I realized how freeing that was." The evolution of Sumter's politics related to race and gender has taken place alongside the evolution of her own sense of self. "I love how I love myself. Coming in, I didn't. I didn't know how to love myself. I didn't know what that meant. I learned how to be brave in all spaces."

Late last year, months after I spoke with Sumter, the #MeToo campaign swept across the nation, creating a cultural reckoning around sexual assault and harassment in politics, media, and entertainment. Academic institutions were not immune. Flyers circulated at Spelman and Morehouse criticizing the colleges' response to sexual assault, and a damning graffiti message appeared on the side of Morehouse's chapel: "Practice What You Preach Morehouse + End Rape Culture."

Spelman president Mary Schmidt Campbell admits that Morehouse and Spelman must do a better job on behalf of survivors but also believes that the students bringing attention to sexual assault are part of a long tradition of feminist activism that focuses on race and gender.

"There were always those willing to disrupt the way things were at Spelman on their way to disrupting the way things are in the culture at large," she says. "This is not a new set of activities for Spelman College. Spelman women have been on the forefront of social activism for change for many generations."

\*ENDOWMENT FIGURES DRAWN FROM A 2016 SURVEY THAT RANKED 1,158 INSTITUTIONS, INCLUDING 51 OF THE CURRENT 101 HBCUs  
MONICA SERRANO, NGM STAFF; LAWSON PARKER  
SOURCE: U.S. NEWS & WORLD REPORT

ACTIVISM AT SPELMAN AND MOREHOUSE also has permeated spaces where it previously didn't exist. Just as some of the iconography of events like Market Friday illuminates a renewed feeling of racial pride, other events on campus reaffirm a solidarity that can be found only at HBCUs.

The annual Miss Maroon and White pageant, sponsored by Morehouse, sees women from Spelman College and Clark Atlanta University take part in competitions meant to showcase their beauty, sense of social responsibility, and intellectual dexterity. Watching the pageant is an exercise in cognitive dissonance. In many ways it's an antiquated exhibit of patriarchy that perpetuates the sort of gender norms that should prompt a larger conversation about sexual misconduct. And yet the show has taken on new vigor, in part as a political performance.

Outside the pageant, a photograph features the five contestants, steel-faced and adorned with black berets, an homage to the hats worn by Black Panther Party members of the 1960s and '70s—a group whose political sensibilities veered away from nonviolence and toward radical self-defense against police brutality and state violence.

The lights dim, and students—many in gas masks—run down the aisles of the theater, jumping onto the stage before beginning a forceful and compelling dance number. The contestants, wearing black leather jackets, make their way to the stage to the Michael Jackson song “They Don't Care About Us.” “Beat me, hate me. You can never break me,” the lyrics go. “Will me, thrill me. You can never kill me.” Images of protests are projected on screens, and a graffiti-covered wall stands as a backdrop. Each woman introduces herself to the audience, describing who she is and why she should be named Miss Maroon and White. Each declaration is imbued with a mix of appreciation for the men of Morehouse in a country where the certainty of their very existence feels precarious. “Brothers grow not weary in this plight, black will prevail in this perilous fight,” one young woman says as she opens the evening with a poem.

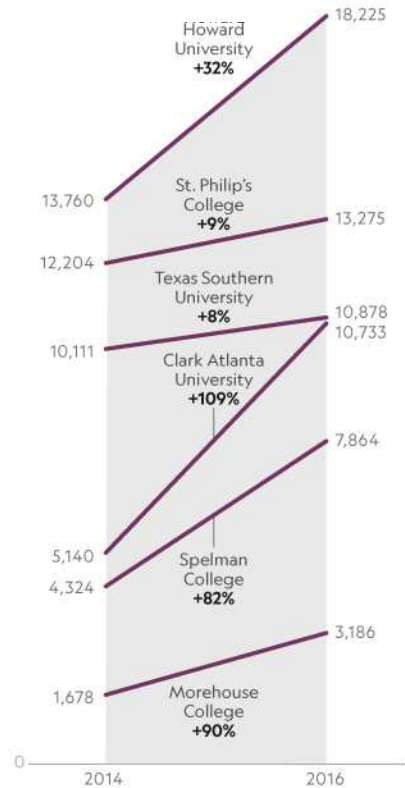
The auditorium is filled with a cross section

## ATTRACTING GREATER INTEREST

Applications to universities across the U.S. are on the rise, but some of the HBCUs are experiencing especially dramatic enrollment growth. Clark Atlanta University has seen a 109 percent increase in applicants, for example.

### FALL APPLICANTS

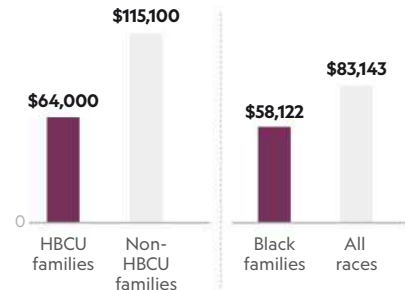
Selected HBCUs



## GRANTING OPPORTUNITIES

Families of students at HBCUs often have significantly lower incomes than families of students at other colleges and universities.

### U.S. AVERAGE HOUSEHOLD INCOME



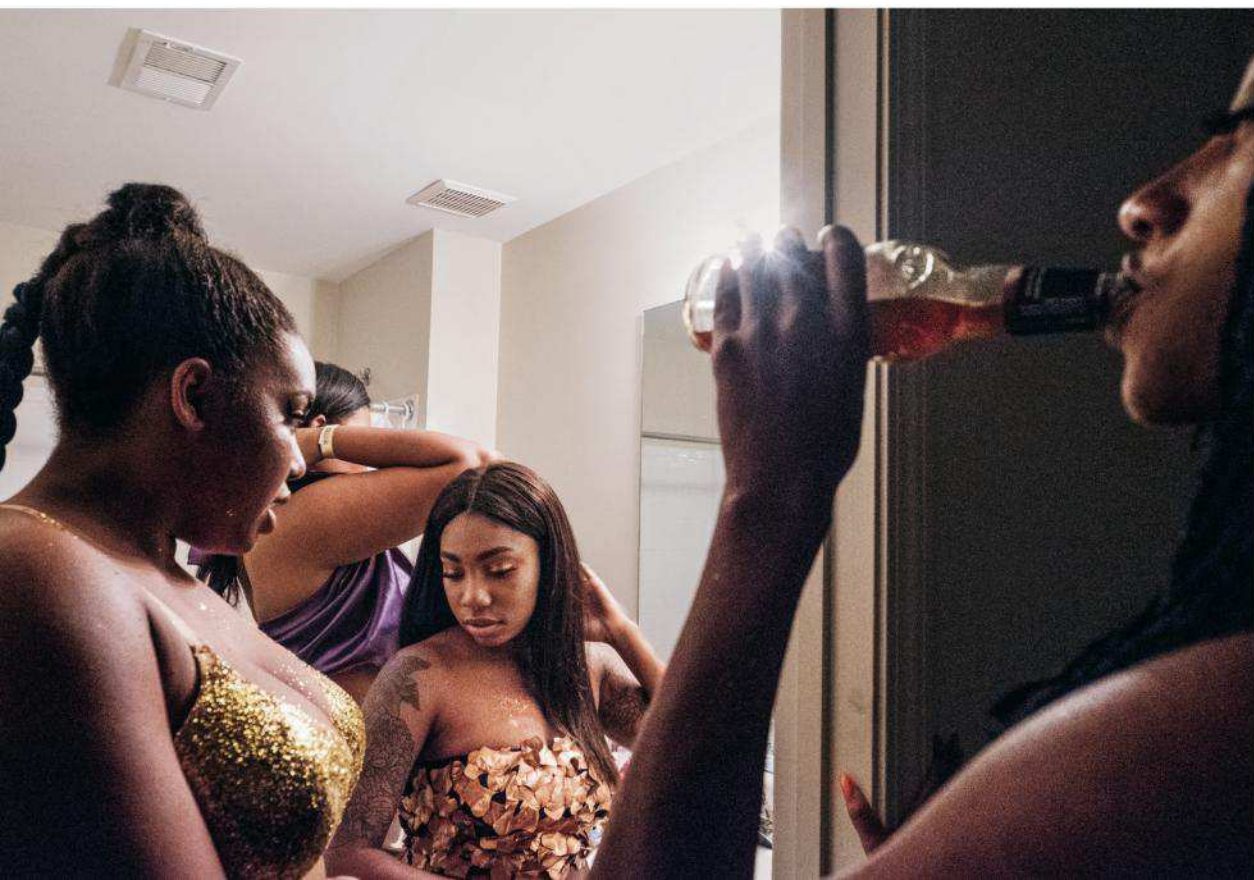
FIRST-TIME UNDERGRADUATE APPLICANTS, REPORTED BY 65 OF 101 HBCUS

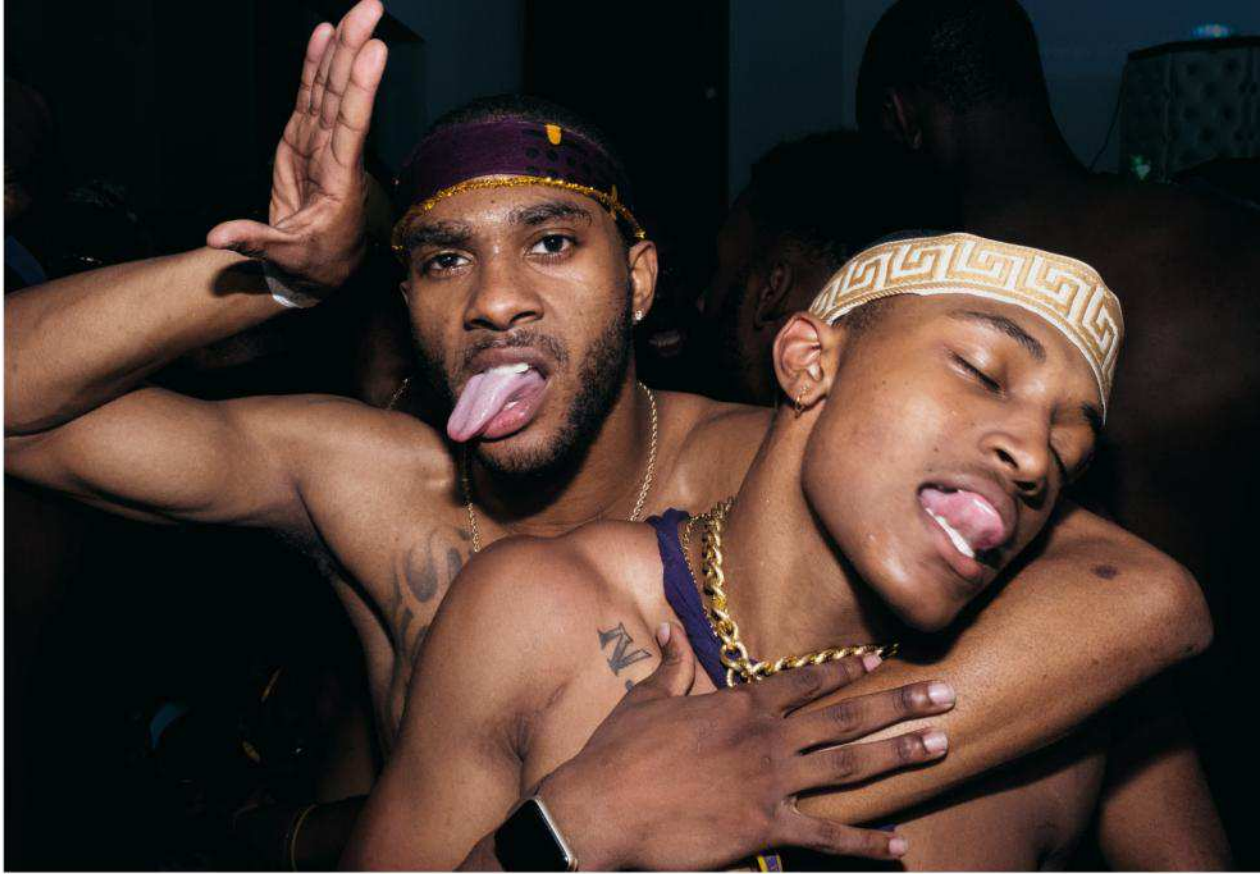
SOURCES: MARYBETH GASMAN, UNIVERSITY OF PENNSYLVANIA; INTEGRATED POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION DATA SYSTEM; U.S. CENSUS BUREAU; "MOBILITY REPORT CARDS: THE ROLE OF COLLEGES IN INTERGENERATIONAL MOBILITY"



Above: Spring 2017 Morehouse graduate Avery Jackson stands in front of the portraits of global leaders in the fight for civil and human rights that hang in King Chapel's International Hall of Honor. Below: Spelman students Mecca McFadden, Kalin Tate, and Safiyyah Logan took hours to make outfits for the Morehouse chapter of Alpha Phi Alpha fraternity's annual end-of-the-year toga party.

RADCLIFFE "RUDDY" ROYE (ABOVE); NINA ROBINSON (BELOW)





Above: Austin Fleury (left) and Trent Gilliam, members of Omega Psi Phi fraternity at Morehouse, share a moment of brotherhood – and flash their fraternity’s informal hand sign and tongue wag at the toga party. Below: Janae’ Sumter used art and activism to encourage Spelman College to be more supportive of the school’s LGBTQ community. After graduating in spring 2017, she enrolled at New York’s Pratt Institute.

RADCLIFFE “RUDDY” ROYE (BOTH)





Spring 2017 Spelman graduate Nanmanian Camara, an aspiring dentist, celebrates with her aunt, Mamata Soumah (left), and mother, Tenin Kaba. Camara's Guinean family is proud of the first-generation American and college grad.

NINA ROBINSON



of students: athletes in sports apparel, fashionistas in trendsetting attire, anti-capitalism activists with Afros crinkled toward the sky, and students who spent the summer interning on Wall Street. Many, such as Morehouse junior Chad Rhym, were unaware such plurality existed among a group often portrayed as culturally indistinguishable. “I got to Morehouse, and I saw all these different communities,” Rhym says.

RHYM SITS ACROSS from me outside the *Maroon Tiger* newsroom, where he’s one of the paper’s editors. He has a scruffy beard, amber skin, and an intentionally ruffled low-temp fade. “We can all watch the game but then talk about satire and talk about the Republican Party or what’s going on with our political climate,” he

‘nigger,’” he says, shaking his head. “So being in this cluster of black men, it’s like, oh, we all know what we’ve been through. We all know what’s been put up against us.”

Rhym describes a feeling that has been articulated by black students since HBCUs were established in the mid-19th century. One of the most preeminent HBCU alums, W.E.B. Du Bois, wrote about his own discovery at Fisk University in his book *Darkwater*—an amalgamation of essays, poems, and multigenre polemic musings.

For Du Bois, who graduated as the only black student in his high school class in Great Barrington, Massachusetts, Fisk was a revelation. He recalled that his years at Fisk marked the first time in his life that he was surrounded by people who shared his experience. Fisk expanded

## Morehouse and Spelman students represent not just the best of black America but also the diversity of black America.

says, echoing a sentiment Dixon expressed. At many HBCUs, students have made their way to a place where they don’t have to pick and choose certain parts of themselves to share with the world. It’s a place where they can be varied, where they can be whole.

Rhym clearly felt a weight had been lifted from his shoulders upon coming to Morehouse, which gave him the room to explore. His college decision was catalyzed by spending time in mostly white spaces. His high school in Athens, Georgia, was predominantly black, but his advanced courses, like Dixon’s, were nearly all white. “It’s like,” he says, pausing and looking up as if waiting for the thought to become fully crystallized, “do I belong here? White people telling you about ‘affirmative action,’ like you don’t really belong. So coming to Morehouse is getting that huge confidence boost, like you deserved it.”

Sometimes it wasn’t even as subtle as a comment about affirmative action. “I’ve been called

his understanding of what it meant to be black in America. It was neither, as some social scientists of the day implied, a homogenous culture nor an inferior one. It was a vibrant and dynamic community of people whose experiences were as diverse as the complexions of their skin.

“Consider, for a moment,” Du Bois wrote, “how miraculous it all was to a boy of seventeen, just escaped from a narrow valley ... my people came dancing about me ... Boys with my own experiences and out of my own world, who knew and understood.”

IN AUGUST 2017 I returned to Atlanta to attend “For Whom the Bell Tolls,” part of a weeklong new-student orientation that officially welcomed nearly 750 young men to Morehouse.

It was cool for an August morning, still balmy with the thick air of a southern summer. The campus was quiet but for the intermittent whistles and the crashing of shoulder pads from a



preseason football practice. The sun still rested between yesterday and today, not yet etching its way into the blue-black sky.

Dressed in plain white T-shirts, black shorts, and an array of multicolored running shoes in front of the Frederick Douglass Academic Resource Center, the Morehouse freshman class stood with their arms locked, swaying left to right as they sang the Morehouse hymn. On the stairwell stood upperclassmen wearing various iterations of all-black garments. Some held torches that illuminated the area, while others moved between the interlocked lines of freshmen.

“When you go out, people are going to see Morehouse,” shouted one of the torch-bearing upperclassmen. “They don’t just see you. So you have to hold your brothers accountable.”

After another more forceful rendition of the hymn, the young men sprinted off into the morning behind an upperclassman holding a torch. Every few minutes the students transitioned from station to station—blurry cavalcades of white streaks crisscrossing the campus. At each station they learned more of the history, the rituals, and the mission of being a Morehouse man.

At one of the stations, an upperclassman in a tweed jacket and maroon tie stood on the high pedestal of the college’s Martin Luther King, Jr., statue in front of the chapel and spoke forcefully: “Our color intimidates them, for they fear an educated black man.” The freshmen stared up at him as he moved between the wide bronze legs of King’s rendering. With the vehemence of a southern preacher, he invoked the nomenclature of the racial justice movements that have shaped the social and cultural landscape in the past several years: Hands up, don’t shoot. Say her name. I can’t breathe. Black lives matter.

WHAT MAKES MOREHOUSE AND SPELMAN important is not necessarily the idea that these students represent the best of black America but that they represent the diversity of black America. There are students who grew up being the only black students at their elite primary and secondary schools and students who went to public schools in low-income areas. There are

socially conservative evangelical students who struggle to accept homosexuality, and there are transgender students pushing the traditional boundaries of gender and sexuality in new directions. There are students with radical political sensibilities—who advocate the abolition of prisons, police, and capitalism. There are students who represent the third generation of their families to attend these schools and who plan to work in finance.

There is not so much a quintessential “Morehouse man” or “Spelman woman” as there is a range of students defining for themselves what they will draw from their experiences. These students are coming of age at a time of renewed political engagement and are trying to better understand who they are as young black people in relation to a changing world. Students at HBCUs have often been at the forefront of advocating social change across lines of race, class, gender, and sexuality. “During the civil rights movement the women of Spelman and the men of Morehouse were on the front lines,” Spelman president Campbell says. “The entire history of HBCUs has been to disrupt the narrative around black people.”

I did not attend a historically black college, but I am the progeny of Spelman and Morehouse. I, instead, made my way to a small liberal arts school where I was one of 12 black men in my graduating class. I was a Division I athlete. I wrote for the school paper. I joined a black fraternity. I made lifelong friends.

I always knew, however, that there was an experience I wasn’t having, that there was something unique about an HBCU that couldn’t be replicated anywhere else. I think about the pride of my parents. I was adorned in maroon-and-white Morehouse paraphernalia at a young age. I would hear my parents laugh in a way I had never heard before when their college friends visited our home for dinner. It was a different kind of joy. The historically black college experience reaffirmed that they belonged to something, a place and a people worthy of celebrating. □

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The Pulitzer Center on Crisis Reporting provided a grant to support the photography for this story.





# RESISTANCE, REIMAGINED

An artist reenacts historic scenes from the black struggle for freedom. Though times and places differ, the resolve is the same.

**ALABAMA, 1965** Voting rights supporters marching from Selma to Montgomery in March 1965 had to brave violent resistance from state troopers and white separatists. Omar Victor Diop's re-creation preserves this historical detail: Some marchers wore garlands given by a prominent Hawaiian clergyman as a gesture of solidarity.

By Maurice Berger  
Photographs by Omar Victor Diop

## In depictions by Senegalese artist Omar Victor Diop, the black struggle for freedom is as global as the history of protest yet as personal as each protester's story.

It's so personal, in fact, that Diop himself plays every male role in the photo series "Liberty," vignettes he created based on visual and written sources in Africa and the African diaspora. The scenes, set apart by time, geography, and scope, present a vibrant, visual chronology of these consequential events.

The images in "Liberty" commemorate slave revolts, independence movements, social justice quests, and the events that sparked them. Subjects range from Queen Nanny and her brother, Quao, who rebelled against British colonialists to establish a community of former slaves in 18th-century Jamaica, to Trayvon Martin, the unarmed African-American teen whose 2012 shooting by neighborhood watch volunteer George Zimmerman inspired the Black Lives Matter movement.

Diop composed scenes using multiple images of himself—but "the picture would be far from complete if it didn't feature female characters," he says. "Black women played a role as important as their male counterparts' in the struggle." His friend Khadija Boye poses as all the women in the series.

From his vantage in Senegal, Diop designed his latest project to draw a parallel "between the chronology of protest movements on the continent and that of similar movements in the diaspora happening at similar time periods." He did so, he has said, in hopes of "trying to have a more universal reading of the history of black protest, in order to build bridges for a

better understanding of the question."

Diop's images are rich with telling details, based on the careful study of historical clothing and textiles as well as the symbolism of local plants and flowers. The distinctions challenge the Western tendency to see Africa, and the lives of black people throughout the world, as monolithic—as an "abstract concept rather than a reality," in Diop's words. His meticulous recreations remind us that protests are more than physical actions. They're also cultural events in which clothing and style are a form of political expression, from the flower garlands worn by Selma marchers, a gift from a Hawaiian clergyman as a symbol of respect and solidarity, to the signature berets and leather jackets of the Black Panther Party in the United States.

By recasting history and posing as its subjects, Diop makes the past come alive in the present. He focuses on our collective humanity, affirming the debt we owe to the efforts of our ancestors. And he reminds us that historically, this activism didn't just affect the lives of participants—it altered the destinies of future generations.

Diop's meditations on the historic quest for freedom are at once sobering and exhilarating. Like the events that inspire them, these dramatic scenes are haunted by the specter of violence, murder, and oppression—but they also resonate with optimism and hope. In the end, "Liberty" celebrates the power of black resistance, in its many forms, to change the world. □


**FLORIDA, 2012** Minutes after George Zimmerman called Sanford, Florida, police to report "a real suspicious guy," he shot Trayvon Martin, 17. The death fueled Black Lives Matter protests in which hoodies like the one the unarmed teen had worn, and the Skittles candy he carried, were symbols of resistance.





**THE WOMEN'S WAR, NIGERIA, 1929** To protest oppression by British colonial rulers in southeastern Nigeria, women from the Ibo ethnic group rioted. After two months of unrest, the rulers agreed to reforms. Diop asked friend Khadija Boye to play the women in the photo series: "We have a striking physical resemblance, which sort of makes her look like my female alter ego."





**THE FREEMAN FIELD  
MUTINY, INDIANA, 1945**

The only black bomber group created during World War II was at Freeman Army Airfield in southern Indiana when its officers tried to integrate an all-white officers' club. More than a hundred men were arrested, and three were court-martialed. Historians consider it a significant turn in the campaign to end racial segregation in the U.S. military.

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See more from this series at  
[ngm.com/Apr2018](http://ngm.com/Apr2018).







## HALLOWED EARTH

By Katie Couric

The color palette inside the jars is an array of browns. The rich, red clay found throughout Alabama, where men and women did backbreaking work from before sunrise to well past sundown. The dark fertile dirt of the black belt. The sandy soil of the Gulf Coast.

“Soil is really a powerful medium for talking about this history,” Bryan Stevenson tells me, as we walk by the jars. “In many ways, the sweat of enslaved people is buried in this soil. The blood of lynching victims is in this soil. The tears of people who were segregated and humiliated during the time of Jim Crow is in this soil.”

The soil in these jars represents the lives of countless Americans who never had a proper burial, who met unspeakably violent deaths for “serious offenses,” like arguing with a white man. These are the victims honored as part of the Equal Justice Initiative’s new Legacy Museum and memorial in Montgomery, Alabama.

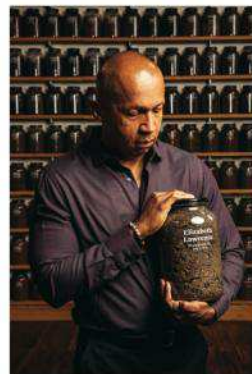
Stevenson is one of the most eloquent

and committed people I’ve ever met. Author of the book *Just Mercy* and founder of the EJI, he’s made it his life’s work to seek justice for the most vulnerable, disadvantaged, and mistreated among us.

The new memorial to lynching victims will open this spring, along with a museum that will trace grim parts of the African-American experience, from slavery to mass incarceration. One exhibit will display nearly 300 jars of soil from lynching sites throughout the South.

Last year I got a preview when I walked into a room and saw 11 rows containing scores of jars, each with the name of a person who had been lynched. Most were from Alabama—men, women, and children. As I gazed at them, I silently read the names lettered simply on the jars: Jordan Corbin ... Sidney Johnson ... Joe Leads ... Will McBride ... Rufus Lesseur ... Bush Withers ... Lillie Cobb. I wondered about the lives they lived, and lost, and those who were left behind.

I learned the story of Elizabeth Lawrence, a schoolteacher in Birmingham who scolded a group of white children who threw stones at her. The children told their parents. A mob came to



Bryan Stevenson holds one of the jars of soil gathered from lynching sites for display at a museum in Montgomery, Alabama.

Katie Couric explores racism and other timely subjects in her series *America Inside Out With Katie Couric*, premiering April 11 at 10/9c on National Geographic.

her home, murdered her, and burned her house down. I learned the story of Thomas Miles, Sr., of Shreveport, Louisiana, a black man who was accused of writing a letter to a white woman. After a judge acquitted him, he was abducted by a mob outside the courtroom and taken to a tree where he was beaten, stabbed, shot, and hanged.

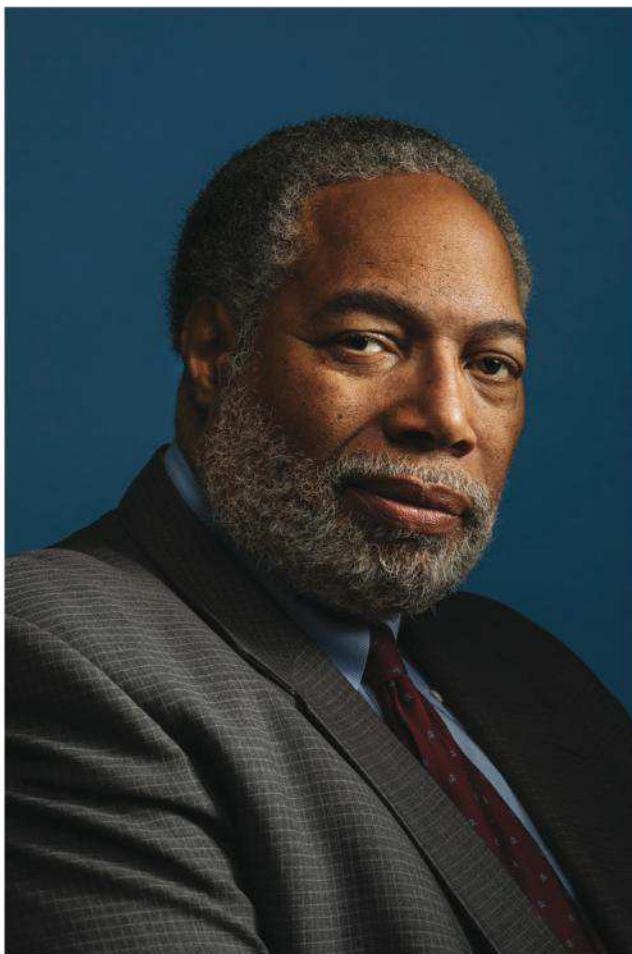
I learned the story of Mamie, who was a child in Mississippi when her father and his friend were threatened with lynching. Mamie's family fled; her father's friend stayed and was hanged. Mamie had not uttered the state's name until she returned many decades later, to gather soil from the lynching site for the friend's memorial jar. In that moment "I felt like I laid my burdens down," said Mamie Kirkland. She was 107 years old.

Some descendants have traveled great distances to make the sad sojourn to see the place where their ancestors' remains had long ago been absorbed by the earth. The EJI has documented more than 4,400 people lynched in 35 states—the most in Georgia, Louisiana, and Mississippi—between 1877 and 1950.

Lynchings occurred at any time, for many reasons: allegations of a serious crime or a casual transgression, fear of interracial sex, or desire for public spectacle. The terror it induced is impossible to describe, a burden still carried today.

We haven't learned to talk about lynching—or the nation's racist history—in an open and honest way. It's difficult to face the past, to acknowledge the role of some of our ancestors in the brutality inflicted upon their fellow humans. Despite what we were taught in grade school, our collective shame does not fit neatly in the time period between the Civil War and the civil rights movement. It's time to understand the complete picture of our history, to have the courage to go there, to absorb it.

Stevenson looked at the jars. "We can grow something with this," he told me. "We can create something with this that has new meaning." That's because while soil may surround us in death, it also is the place to plant seeds of hope for a new beginning.



## FINDING COMMON GROUND

**Lonnie Bunch**, 65, has been an author, an educator, and a historian. Each vocation shaped him for the job he has today: founding director of the Smithsonian National Museum of African American History and Culture in Washington, D.C. Bunch recently was interviewed by *National Geographic* Editor in Chief Susan Goldberg.

**Susan Goldberg:** The museum has been an overwhelming success; visitors have to order tickets months in advance. To what do you attribute that passionate interest?

**Lonnie Bunch:** I think part of it is that so many people really wanted to understand the full history of the United States. A lot of people find this a pilgrimage. The most amazing thing is to watch grandparents talk to grandchildren about an event they lived through or to see people cross racial lines to find common ground over things that once divided us. It really has become a place whose time is now and whose story is so important to all of us. The human scale allows people to feel that they can talk

about issues. Suddenly they're thinking, That could be me. That could be my grandmother. You have an engagement you don't normally have.

**SG:** The discussions about race in the United States right now have taken on a hard edge, a pointed edge. Do you think that this museum is helpful in allowing people to have a place to talk?

**LB:** We are in a divided America, where race and issues of white supremacy are at the forefront of our conversations. I think the museum is a place that helps us explore things that are difficult, helps us explore where race matters and how it's divided us. I also think people come because they believe that by looking at the history of America through an African-American lens, they're finding moments of optimism, moments to believe that no matter how bad things are, you can effect change if you're willing to struggle and to demand America live up to its stated ideals.

**SG:** April is the 50th anniversary of the assassination of Martin Luther King, Jr. If Dr. King could come back, what would he think about things now?

**LB:** Dr. King would feel that there has been great progress. We had an African-American president. You have people like me running museums.

But I think he also would be saddened by the fact that we've not found what he called "the beloved community." We've not found the community where there is economic justice. We've not found the community where race matters, but matters less.

I think he would be impressed by the growth of a black middle class and also the growth in the number of African



Americans going through college and being educated. He'd be pleased to see that there are better notions of integration in certain areas.

I think he'd be disappointed in that we're still so segregated in our schools, that the cities are places where often the American dream doesn't exist for many people. He would be really pleased, but also perplexed at why, 50 years later, these issues still divide us. I think he would be encouraging us to protest, to push, to demand. I think he would demand that we continue to make America better by challenging it.

**SG:** Do you think he'd be proud of what he'd find on many of the streets, in the United States and around the world, that now bear his name?

**LB:** He would've hoped that his street would've run through neighborhoods where people were reaping the best of America. He would be proud that his name would inspire people to be better. I think he would be really impressed that his dream still lives.

A circular gallery in the National Museum of African American History and Culture is ringed with overhead screens that display a constantly changing array of videos and photos.

A video of the interview with Lonnie Bunch is at [ngm.com/Apr2018](http://ngm.com/Apr2018).

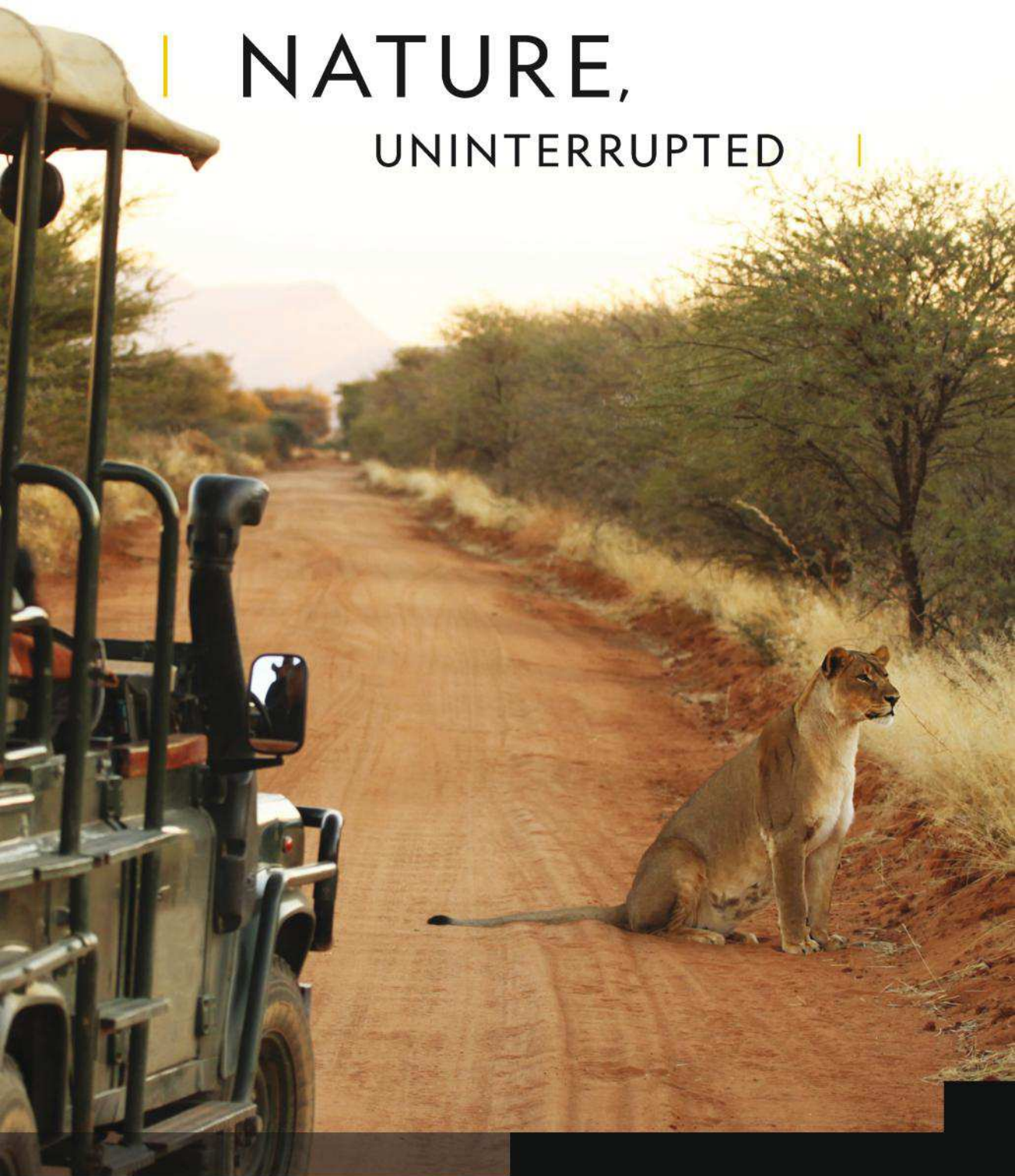
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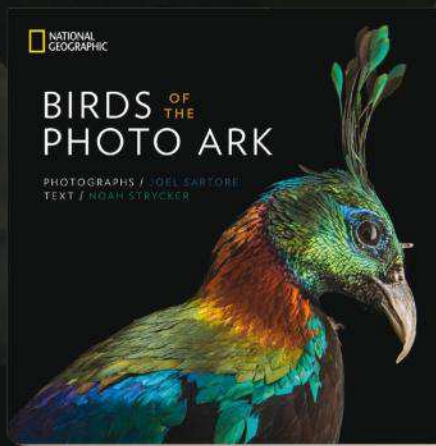
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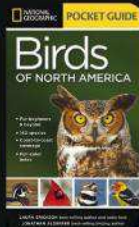
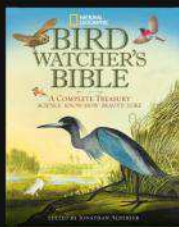
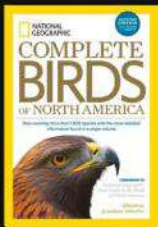
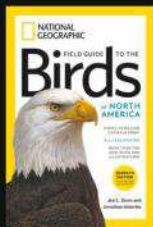
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